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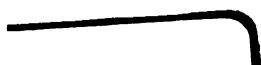
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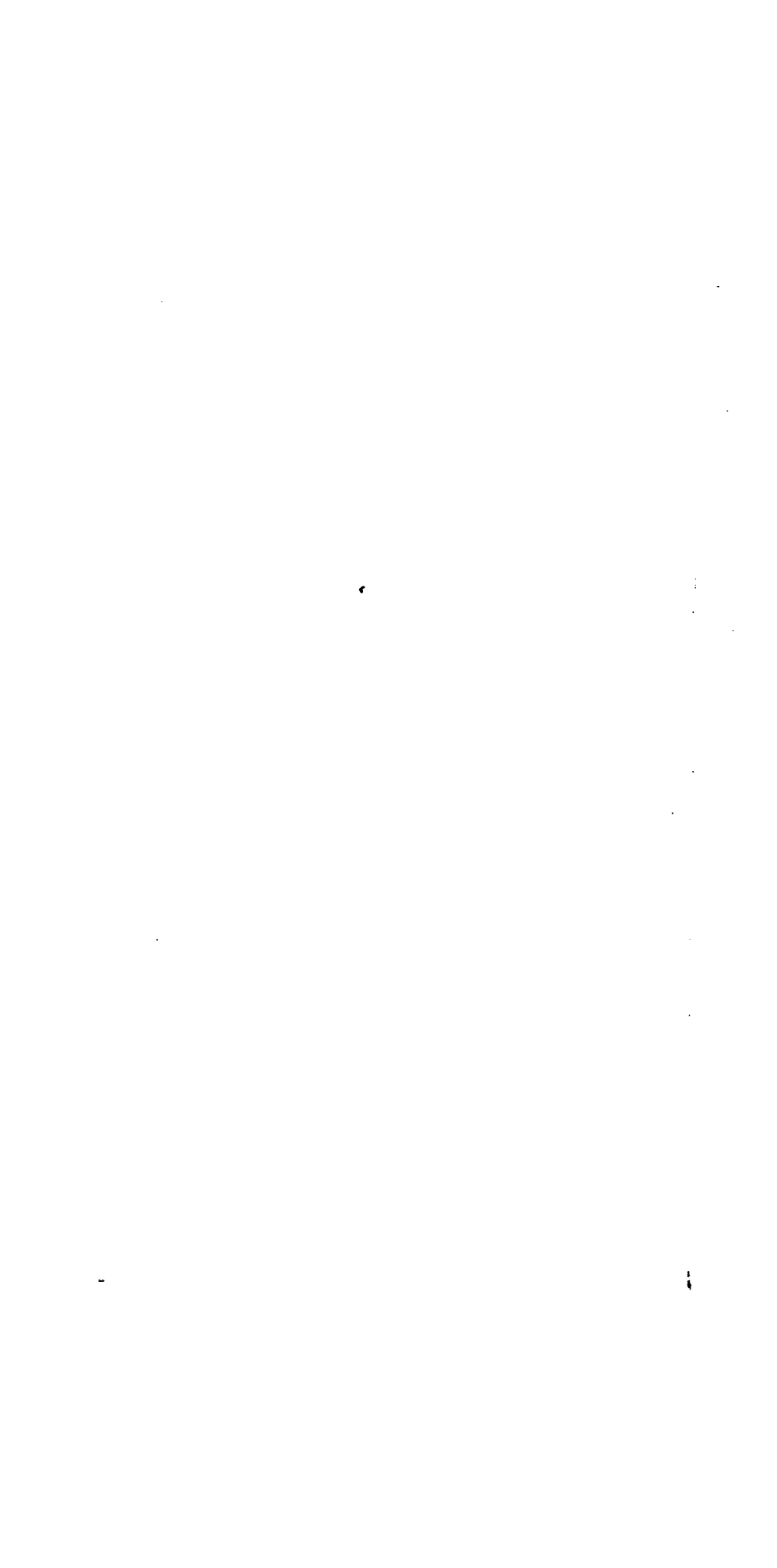
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LECTURES  
ON  
MEDIEVAL CHURCH HISTORY

*BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF LECTURES DELIVERED  
AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE, LONDON*

BY  
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## PREFACE.

I DELIVERED a good many years ago, and more times than one, courses of Lectures on Church History to a class of girls, at Queen's College, London. One course dealt with Early Church History, another with Modern, and between these was one on Medieval. This last course has constituted the groundwork of the present volume, published by request of hearers, but those hearers, as I must acknowledge, my own daughters. I had intended at the first to do no more than print the Lectures as delivered, with some slight occasional revision; and certainly had very imperfectly recognized how much more than this would be required. Little by little I became aware that my present estimate of persons and of things was not always what it once had been, that later books demanded to be read, and later knowledge used; not to say, that it was one thing to address a class of young ladies; who, however little one might know oneself upon a subject, were tolerably sure to know less; and another, to lay oneself open to the criticism of all comers. It has followed that much has been re-written, something withdrawn, not a little added. But with all this I have not sought to discon-



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LECTURES  
ON  
MEDIEVAL CHURCH HISTORY.

LECTURE I.  
*ON THE STUDY OF CHURCH HISTORY.*

IN the study of any vast and complex subject, above all when it is one on which we can bestow only a very limited portion of our time and attention, which therefore it is quite impossible we can master in all its details, it is all-important for us that we should know beforehand what we should look for, on what concentrate our attention; what, as of real significance for us, we should keep in the foreground of our thoughts; what, as of secondary interest, we may allow to fall into the background; what, as indeed of no importance at all, we may dismiss and suffer to fall out of sight altogether. Our faculties are so limited, our memories can retain so little, the claims on our time are so infinite, art is so long and life so short, that all such economies of time and labour are precious. They can nowhere be superfluous or out of place; but hardly anywhere can they be so valuable, indeed I should say they are nowhere so indispensable, as in the study of Church history. The subject is so immense, extending over so large a tract of time, over such vast regions of

space, having its points of contact with so much of deepest interest in almost every other domain of human activity, demanding to be looked at from so many different points of view, while at the same time it affects so closely our own position, and even our own conduct, that we may well desire some preparatory helps to its study, if such can be obtained, some touchstone enabling us to discriminate and discern between that which is most worth our knowing, and that which is of less worth, and that which is of no worth at all.

I must complain of those who have written our Church histories, that they are often very far from helping us here as they ought. One is sometimes tempted to make against them the same complaint which the countryman made, who, having gone to see for the first time some famous city, complained on his return home that he could not see the city for the houses. This has been sometimes cited as a very foolish saying, but it expressed a very real fact ; and, looked at a little closely, there was nothing absurd about it, but what indeed was very much the contrary. What he felt that he wanted was a total impression, with the great distinctive features of the city rising up before him ; and this, lost amid a labyrinth of streets and lanes, and with no one to guide and place him on some station of vantage, he felt that he had been unable to obtain. Now there are Church histories about which one might make a similar complaint. The writers of these have so crowded their pages with smaller events, have so little aimed at giving due prominence to the greater, have so filled their stage with secondary and subordinate personages, that the really grand events and grand actors are in danger of being lost in the crowd ; we fail to distinguish them from the multitude of far inferior importance, or of no importance whatever, that

distract our attention or obstruct our view. We cannot see the city for the houses.

Neither is the way of escape from this inconvenience so easy. If, hoping to avoid it, we betake ourselves to abridgments, saying to ourselves, These at any rate, by the very necessity of the case, will deal only with what is primary, with what is well worth the remembering, we shall probably be quite disappointed in any anticipations of the kind. Not to say that these abridgments are very often hungry, barren, dry skeletons from which all that constitutes the flesh and blood of history has been ruthlessly stript away; not to urge that they often justify too well the medieval proverb, *Compendia Dispendia*, we may very probably encounter in them the same mischief which we were labouring to avoid, and this in a more aggravated form. Shut up in closer limits, the writers have not the less sought to include a little of every thing and a notice of every body within these. Painting on a much narrower canvas, they have introduced into their picture almost as many figures as did those others into the ampler spaces at their command. And thus in these compendiums the same defects will often exist, and in a form more injurious still.

Let me avow boldly that in my judgment the first question one with such a task as mine, and confined for the performance of it within such narrow limits, should ask himself is this,—not ‘How much can I put into my story?’ but rather, ‘What can I omit, and yet at the same time effectually tell that story? What of the lading can I throw overboard, so lightening the sorely burdened ship, at the same time retaining, if not all of the freight which is precious, yet at all events whatever of that is *most* precious?’ This is the question which in these Lectures I shall constantly put to myself; and shall seek

to answer it in the sense which I have already suggested. Instead of multiplying details, such as, if you wish to know them, you may obtain almost anywhere, I shall endeavour to put you at points of view for the taking in of those larger aspects of the subject which more or less determine and dominate the whole. You must not wonder or complain if, having such a story to tell, with so few hours in which to tell it, I omit, foreshorten, trace outlines only, leaving to you to supply what is lacking, to fill in these frameworks at your leisure. Then only you would have ground for complaint, if I wasted on trivialities, such as would inevitably be forgotten almost as soon as heard, on persons and events of little or no ultimate significance, however they may have filled the world with their noise for a while, the brief time we have at our disposal.

But there are other devices—technical and mechanical some of them will appear—which may yet materially assist you in obtaining a clearer oversight of your subject, with mastery up to a certain point of it, and of the relations of its several parts to one another. For instance, there is the distribution of it into periods of manageable length. None of the kingdoms of this world have a history extending over a tract of time at all approaching that over which this history of the kingdom of God extends. And indeed how should they have this? Those kingdoms of the world rise but to fall; while this is a kingdom which endures throughout all ages, having already endured for more than eighteen hundred years. It is needful then in the study of such a history to secure pauses for the mind, ‘landing-places,’ as Coleridge has called them. You may fairly claim to have this long story divided for you into shorter and, if I may say, handier portions. Now, if these divisions are to be of any real service, they must not be

merely arbitrary and artificial. They should each of them represent a different act in that solemn drama of divine Providence which is being enacted on the world's stage. And here it is that I find fault with an arrangement which has hitherto been a very favourite one with Church historians. They have distributed, that is, the story which they had to relate into centuries; and, this done, have told all which belonged, or which seemed to belong, to one century before entering on the events of another. The Magdeburg Centuriators, in many ways most worthy of honour as the fathers of modern Church history, proclaim by their very name that this is the scheme which they have adopted. To each of the thirteen centuries whereof they treat they have attributed a volume of its own; and, down to the time of Mosheim, such has been the popular arrangement. But this distribution by centuries, besides often cutting up the history into portions inconveniently small, lies under the fault which just now I noted, namely, that it is purely arbitrary; and, if it has some advantages, has inconveniences, which, in my judgment at least, very much outweigh its merits. The great movements of the Church very awkwardly adapt themselves to it; often do not adapt themselves at all, altogether traverse and ignore it. These movements will not begin exactly at the beginning of a century, nor end exactly at its close, so to fall in with some artificial scheme of ours; and only when stretched on a bed of Procrustes, or on that same bed abridged and cut short, will they even seem to conform themselves to it.

For myself I am persuaded that I shall do wisely in subordinating the chronological order and sequence of events to the higher interests of my story. With this conviction I shall endeavour, so far as this may be, to

have one central fact or thought in each of my Lectures as its proper subject-matter ; to group my materials round this, recapitulating what may be behind, anticipating what lies before ; refusing altogether, so often as a higher interest seems to demand this, to play the part of annalist or centuriator ; and seeking to marshal my materials according to quite other laws than those of time. Of course, as events happen in time, and as the time when they happen often gives them their chief significance, time cannot be altogether ignored. I shall not, however, count myself bound to string the events which I care to record on the thread which it offers, but shall often prefer to arrange and combine them according to inner affinities of their own.

But this much being on this subject said, there are still errors on the one side and on the other which in the selection and distribution of our materials it behoves us to avoid. That kingdom of heaven which Christ founded in the world is not exclusively the Leaven working inwardly in the hearts of men. As little is it exclusively the Mustard seed, visibly growing up in the sight of all, and spreading forth its branches until it has covered with the shadow of them the whole earth. It is both of these ; and our Lord, when He desired to set forth the future development of that Church which should unfold itself from Him as from its living seed, spake both these parables, one close upon the other (Matt. xiii. 31-33), that they might mutually complete one another, and that we might learn to give due prominence to both aspects of the truth.

Such, no doubt, was his intention, yet this is not always done. There are some Church historians, and those men of eminent piety—indeed no other would be

likely to fall into this error—who have an eye only for the inward operations of grace in the hearts of individual believers. They trace with inexhaustible interest the working of the leaven, the transforming power of the truth, as it fashions into newness of life those who have hidden that truth in their hearts. Neander is the noblest representative of the historians with whom, despite of all their excellencies, we must find this fault. Not too spiritual, but too exclusively spiritual, what he gives us is often a succession of most interesting biographies, a history of the working of the leaven in the souls of separate men. But for the history of the mustard seed, we may often search his great work in vain. It is the Gospel he tells us of, but hardly the Gospel of the kingdom. As we read, we would fain hear more, we want *him* to care more and to tell *us* more, of that kingdom, as it visibly shapes itself in the world, as it confronts the kingdoms of the world; and to trace for us with a livelier interest, and in bolder and firmer outline, the whole course of its outer fortunes no less than that of its inner life.

With other historians on the contrary this, which I have called the history of the mustard seed, is all in all. They bring before us the long array of Councils and Popes and emperors; they detail at length the events adverse and prosperous which befell the Church, the outer conditions of its conflict with the powers of this world. They invite us to mark the visible growth of the tree, the spreading of its branches; how the birds of the air, the great ones of the earth, came and sought shelter in its branches, how this and that tribe or nation cast aside its idols, accepted baptism, and was aggregated to the Church. But with all this the inward renewing power of the word of life, its secret energy, as it makes its presence felt in the hearts and thoughts and lives of men, is kept



out of sight ; of these matters they tell us little or nothing, for these they have no eye. If the others were at fault in making Church history merely a history of personal piety, these are still more in fault, not caring to tell us anything about that which after all is the distinctive mark of the children of the kingdom. In taking these two parables, of the Leaven and of the Mustard seed, and giving to both of them their full rights, we shall find our best protection against onesidedness in this direction or in the other.

There is another point which you have a right to expect that we shall not permit you to miss, the relations, namely, of this history to contemporary profane history, and at the same time its difference and distinctness from that history. Two dangers are before us here ; the one, to lose sight of its distinctness, that is, its supernatural character, to merge it in the world-history ; the other, to forget the fact that the Church exists for the world, quite as really as the world exists for the Church, so that there can happen no worse thing for the Church than to forget or to deny this. I know that there are some for whom the Church is at best nothing better than the organization of the moral life of a human community for the furthering of moral ends ; and who therefore are quite consistent when they affirm that the lines which divide sacred history and profane exist nowhere except in our imaginations. All history, they urge, is sacred ; and so in a manner it is, being the history of man ; and certainly if a heathen moralist could say, *Homo, sacra res*, much more, and with better right, can we. And yet these, emptying that history of a divine presence and a divine purpose, peculiarly its own, are indeed working toward quite another result, toward the making of all history profane. But that history of which I speak, what

should it be for us? What else but the record of the carrying out in time of a divine purpose for the knitting anew into one fellowship, under the headship of the Son of God, of all those who, receiving Him, do themselves become also sons of God. What other purposes beyond this the Church may exist to fulfil, how far these may reach, and whom besides men they may include, all this is only obscurely hinted in the Scriptures; and such purposes, while we would not exclude, we as little dare to urge. These, if there be such, He who is 'the King of Ages' will in due time declare.

You have a right then to demand of us that we shall tell this story as a divine and a heavenly, not as an earthly and a mundane; that we shall justify the weaving of this man or of that event into the texture of our story by tracing their relation to the objects and ends which I have just mentioned; that we shall mark, and help you to mark, the great stream of tendency, which in the midst of confusions, eddies and perplexing back-waters is evermore setting heavenward. This is a divine history; what therefore we are to look for first and chiefly are the vestiges of God, the print of his footsteps, in it. But it is the history of the Church not as an institution which will know nothing of the world, which in fact has been separated off from the world to the end that the one might be saved, and the other perish. God forbid; it is one rather whose separation from the world exists as much for the world's sake as for the Church's own, that so there may be for the world a City of Refuge, an abiding witness in the midst of it for a higher life than its own; which life, higher though it be, may yet be the portion, and on the simplest terms, of every one who will claim his share in it. The history of the Church is the history of the life of Christ in his members; not indeed without infinite faults, infirmities,

shortcomings, sins, cleaving to those in whom that life is embodied ; but, despite of all these, a continuation of the life which He began upon earth ; the history of a divine Society by Him founded, and which, strange to say, like an inverted tree, has its roots above and not below, in heaven and not on earth. All that has been the true expression of this divine life, all that has helped the unfolding of it, all the precious flowers and fruits by which it has made its presence known, all too which has hindered the unfolding of that nobler life, it is of these that any Church history, which is true to its own objects, should tell us.

Here then we have something of a clue to guide us through that which else might prove an inextricable labyrinth. Let us have grasped the events, let us have recognized the persons, that have effectually wrought to the unfolding of this higher life, and then, whatever else we may have failed to make our own, the leading threads, the true *stamina* of the history, are in our hands. Let us on the contrary have missed these, let us not have attempted, or attempting let us have failed, to disengage these from the multitude of facts and people with which they are mingled, and among which they are in danger of being lost, and however well we may be up in names and dates, in martyrdoms and persecutions and heresies, in Fathers, in Councils, in Popes, in Emperors, in events of this century and events of the other, still the real meaning and purpose of Church history will have escaped us.

I would not willingly bring this brief introductory Lecture to a close without naming to you one or two faults, not so much intellectual as moral, into which, as it seems to me, some who have undertaken to tell this wondrous tale have fallen, and have led others to fall ; and in which, if we did not watch against them, we might also be very

easily entangled ourselves ; faults from which I would fain keep myself clear, and help to keep you clear. Beware then, I would say to you, above all of those who in their survey of the Lord's field have an eye only for the tares, and none for the wheat ; who point out to us the mountains of chaff on the Lord's floor, but who neither themselves see, nor help to make others see, the golden grains which are abundantly hidden among this chaff ; never so well pleased as when, at the expense of the Church, they can gratify a proud and self-satisfied world. Such there are, though certainly it is not English Church writers who are the greatest offenders here. To have been a standard-bearer of the truth is no title of honour in their eyes, but rather the contrary. If they have any heroes, these are to be found among such as the Church has been compelled to put from her and to disown, not among them whom she has delighted to honour. But indeed they have seldom any heroes at all. At their touch all which was high becomes low, all which was heroic dwarfs and dwindles into littleness and meanness. The men who spent themselves in contending to the death for truths which should be dearer to us than light or life were at the best enthusiasts whose earnestness may just redeem them from our contempt.

But there is much very short of this, against which it is well you should be upon your guard. That Church of the living God, some stages of whose growth we would fain trace for your instruction—you are not without it, but within. It is your shelter, appointed of God to be this. Nothing of its past history should be a matter of mere curiosity or entertainment to you. You are heirs of whatever it has held fast and made its own, you are losers by whatever it has lost or let go. But the temptation is strong to contemplate all this as from some 'coign of

vantage ' external to it, admiring this and criticising that ; adjudging praise to this man and blame to the other ; resolving that this one went too far, and that not far enough ; that Tertullian was too fierce, and Jerome too touchy ; that Luther might sometimes have kept a better tongue in his head, and so on with the others. Dwell not, save in so far as this is necessary that so you may not miss the lessons which God would teach you, on the faults and mistakes of those who have been called to do his work in his Church, and have done it. There is something better for us to dwell on in this work of theirs ; for He who is wonderful everywhere, is nowhere so wonderful as in the congregation of his saints, that is, of those who with all their errors, their sins, their shortcomings, were the elect of humanity, the bravest, the purest, the noblest whom the world has seen.

Accept then, I would say in conclusion, accept with all reverence the fact that the Church militant, if in all ages a success, is also in all ages a failure. The success may be more evident in one age and in one land, the failure may be more marked in another ; but tokens of this and of that will never be wanting. Some may dwell almost exclusively on one of these aspects ; we shall do well not to hide our eyes from either. For us who believe the Church to be an institution in the world directly divine, it must be a success, even as it shows itself to be such by many infallible proofs. For us who know that the treasure of God's grace is contained in earthen vessels, it must be a failure no less, an imperfect embodiment of a divine idea. Let us boldly face this side of the truth no less than the other ; taking its history for what it most truly is, an *Acta Sanctorum*, but not forgetting that it is something very different from this as well.

## LECTURE II.

*THE MIDDLE AGES BEGINNING.*

I VENTURED in my former Lecture to find fault with the distribution of Church history into centuries, as a distribution purely arbitrary and artificial, and one to which the actual events and movements with which that history has to deal refuse to conform. But suppose we were to say, This history presents itself to us under three leading aspects, one succeeding the other ; its several periods having each its own characteristic features, and, so far as we can judge, a purpose and task of its own to fulfil ; I will therefore mentally distribute it into three portions, corresponding to these several periods, and call them each by a several name, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. Here, supposing that assumption to be a correct one, would be a scheme of distribution natural and not forced, one answering to facts in the world of realities, one therefore which would afford genuine assistance to the learner, and help to bring real clearness and order into his studies.

But this much being admitted, it would still be necessary to define precisely the limits of these several periods : at what date Ancient Church history should be assumed to have closed and Medieval to have begun ; and again, when Medieval came to an end and Modern commenced. That these are questions not perfectly easy to answer is evident from the very different limits and landmarks of each period on which different writers have fixed. To

take, then, Ancient Church history first:—there can indeed be no question about the time of its beginning. The day of Pentecost would on all sides be acknowledged as the birthday, the *dies natalis*, of the Church. But about the date of the termination of Ancient Church history there would not be at all the same consent. Some would assign to it a duration of eight hundred years, would make it reach to the revival of the Empire under Charles the Great (800). I must needs think that this is a duration as much too long as that of Hallam is too short, who counts the Middle Ages to have commenced with the invasion of Gaul by Clovis (486); and so too Dowling, who says, ‘we cannot find a later era for their commencement.’ My own conviction is that we articulate the history more justly when we affirm that, as Ancient history it closed, and as Medieval began, with the Pontificate of Gregory the Great (590). In him, the last of the Latin Fathers, the first, in our modern acceptation of the word, among the Popes, we bid adieu to the old Greek and Roman culture and literature and habits of thought as the predominant and ruling forces of the world. The ancient classical world still lives on in bequests innumerable, visible and invisible, not a few among these of priceless worth, which it has made to all times after. But another order of things is shaping itself; and Gregory the Great, standing at the meeting-place of the old and the new, does more than any other to set the Church forward upon the new lines on which henceforth it must travel, to constitute a Latin Christianity and Christendom, with distinctive features of its own, such as broadly separate it from Greek.

Then, too, there are several grand events in the fifteenth century which suggest themselves as world-epochs; fitted as such to mark the conclusion of the Middle Ages, the commencement of another Age. There is the Inven-

tion of Printing (1440). There is the Fall of Constantinople, and with it of the Eastern Empire (1453). Closely connected with both of these, but still capable of being distinguished from them, even as it commenced before them, there is the Revival of Learning ; to which, however, it is impossible to affix an exact date. There is, lastly, the Discovery of America (1492), with the widening of men's thoughts to correspond with the outward fact of a remoter horizon and a wider world. They are all events of an immense importance ; and each one of them well fitted to toll the knell of a departing age, and to announce the birth of a new. They might every one of them plead its own fitness to be the merestone to mark where one era terminated and another began. But they have all of them primarily a more or less mundane significance ; and seeing that we are treating of a history which is not of this world, however it may be in it, I should be disposed to look a little further, to the Reformation (1517), and to conclude the period of Medieval Church history with it. No doubt, in some respects, it is too late a day. We are already well advanced in the modern world ; but grave embarrassments attend the selection of any other date, graver than those which attend this.

Modern Church history remains, that which is actually unfolding itself before our eyes, and in which we ourselves play our part. What the limits in duration of this may be, what will come after it, if indeed it shall not prove a winding up of the present dispensation, these 'times and seasons' it is not for us to know.

But these three periods, each of them including many hundred years, are still too big to be conveniently handled. The larger blocks of time must again be broken up into smaller sizes, the divisions must be in their turn them-



selves further subdivided. All who have undertaken to tell the Church's story have felt this, and that resting-places at shorter intervals must be found. Thus Ancient Church history might again be profitably distributed into three lesser portions. The first of these periods would be properly characterized as the Apostolic, reaching down as it does to the death of the last of the Apostles, St. John (98), and embracing therefore something less than one hundred years. This period has a distinctive character of its own, being in the Apostles and Apostolic men authoritative and constitutive for the after Church. Upon this follows the period of the Church's conflict with heathen Rome, the period of the *Ecclesia pressa*, as it is sometimes called, reaching down to Constantine's Edict of Toleration (311). Then, completing the period of Ancient Church history, follow some two centuries or more, during much of which the Church rides on the high places of the earth, having exchanged the trials of adversity for the temptations, at least as dangerous, of prosperity.

In the same way Medieval Church history will fitly fall into three subdivisions. The first, extending from the Pontificate of Gregory the Great to that of Gregory VII. (1050), will embrace the Middle Ages in their formation, as a new order of things is gradually shaping itself out of the chaos and confusion in which those Ages began; the breaking up of an old world, and little by little the organization of a new. The second period will reach from the Pontificate of Gregory VII. to that of Boniface VIII., or the Middle Ages in their glory and at their height. To this, their creative period, belong all those magnificent births which they have bequeathed, some to the admiration, and all to the wonder, of the after world—the Crusades, the rise of Gothic Architecture, the Uni-

versities, the Schoolmen, the Mystics, the Mendicant Orders. To this belongs the struggle, so grand and so terrible, between the world-king and the world-priest, the Emperor and the Pope, with the triumph, complete though temporary, of the latter; and thus to this also belongs the Papacy in the most towering heights to which it ever ascended.

Then follows the period from Boniface VIII. to the Reformation, or the Middle Ages in their decline and fall. Their productive vigour is exhausted; they are unable to bring forth any new births, or to maintain at their height and in their strength such as they have received from the times which went before. These Ages, once so confident in themselves, but now defeated in so many of their dearest expectations, are losing heart; they have ceased to believe in themselves any more, and so give clearest intimation that whatever good purposes they and the institutions which were proper and peculiar to them were capable of serving, these they had served already; that the one crowning favour which some of the most characteristic among these institutions could now confer on the Church and the world would be to pass away, if so a new and a better might succeed in their room.

The period of Modern Church history, being as yet only partially completed, being one, moreover, which we do not contemplate from any external point of view, but in which we ourselves are involved, is less capable of being further subdivided than either which went before. At the same time the Peace of Westphalia (1648) offers a real turning-point in the Church's history and a convenient resting-place for the mind. With this Peace the political, though not the religious, conflict between the Reformed and the Roman Catholic communities in Latin

Christendom came virtually to an end. That remarkable reaction, which had so signally counter-checked the early triumphs of the Reformation, which had won back to the Roman Obedience much that at one moment appeared lost to it for ever, in its turn had run its course; and, having discovered what it could effect, and what it could not, was then compelled to admit, in fact if not in word, that the attempt to crush the Reformation by mere force, as something which had no right to exist, must for ever be renounced.

Hitherto we have contemplated the Church as existing under conditions of *time*. But it subsists also under conditions of *space*; and at different epochs has, so to speak, shifted its centre, and occupied different portions of the area of the civilized world. We may profitably lay out a geographical as well as a chronological ground-plan for our study here. And first, is there any order which we can trace in the midst of all their confusion in these changes of its local dwelling-place? And if so, can we recognize the law which has in different ages determined the bounds of its habitation? I am persuaded that there is, and that we can; and we shall be the more confident that in this we are right, when we find in the main the great changes of place coincident with those other changes in time of which we have just been speaking.


Thus I do not need to remind you at how early a day the Church chipped its Jewish shell, refused any more to be bound in Jewish swaddling clothes; how the Word of life, rejected by those who had the prior right to its blessings, was offered to the heathen, and eagerly embraced by them,—the Apostles, St. Paul in chief, planting Churches in all the principal cities of the Greek and Roman world. Thus during the first period, the

Roman Empire, that zone of fertile land which surrounds the great inland sea, to which we now restrict the name of 'the Mediterranean,' was the chief, almost the exclusive, sphere of the Church's activity. Here and there might be some missionary effort beyond, or even an outlying Church, as in Persia or beyond the Danube; but these were accidental and exceptional. I have called it the Græco-Roman world, for the Asiatic cities, such as Antioch and Ephesus, which play so important a part at this time, had been thoroughly hellenized—this was one of the fruits of Alexander's conquests—indeed, the Greek spirit was immeasurably stronger and more living in them than in Greece itself, where indeed it was very nearly dead. Such is the appointed sphere wherein the Church lives and moves for the first five or six hundred years of its existence. At first overlooked, then repelled as an intruder, slandered, fought against, persecuted, trampled under foot, it yet makes good its position, overcomes by patience, by meekness, by the word of the testimony, by the blood of the Cross; until at length it appropriates the classical language and culture, fills them, so far as they are capable of being filled, with the spirit of a new life; and within the limits of the Roman Empire there rises up, first a Greek and then a Latin Church-literature of inestimable price for all after times.

But the Roman Empire is doomed. Christianity can delay its perishing, but cannot avert it. God has something better in store for his Church than the inheritance of a well-nigh worn-out world. It shall display its power, not in arresting for a while the decay of an old and dying civilization, nor yet upon nations the best of whose life had been long overlived before the Church was planted in their midst; but upon those whose best is all in the future. The rude and unsophisticated children of the North

break down the barriers which Roman arts and arms had so long, and for the last century or two so painfully, maintained against them. They settle in all the fairest provinces of the Western Empire. Ere long, however, they own the mighty power of the Gospel of Christ; of his Church which has stood erect when all other institutions have gone to the ground before them. These races, barbarous indeed, but full of native energy, with many noble possibilities which only waited the word of the Cross to call them out, accept the yoke of Christ; and after a little while the message of the Gospel is carried back by them among the tribes of their kindred which had remained in their primitive seats. The Church is travelling westward and northward, making conquests in these directions which shall serve as a compensation for the immense losses which it is enduring in another quarter; for indeed the great Arabian heresiarch and the Caliphs, his successors, are doing their work only too well, so that in lands once the very cradle of Christianity, it now barely exists through the sufferance and contempt of its foes. The Church is not so much Greek and Latin, with these two hemispheres balancing and completing one another, as Latin and Germanic. I use this word and not German, to indicate that I include therein all families of the Teutonic stock. What is Greek indeed still subsists, but has fallen so far behind that it can hardly be counted any more in the running.

In Modern Church history there is a still further shifting of the centre of the Church's life. Rome is not this centre any more, neither do the nations occupying the soil of the Latin Empire stand in the forefront of things. Repelling and repudiating, as all these did, the Reformation, in which was the Church's hope for the future, they too have fallen into the rear. As the Greek



Church fell behind in the second period, so the Latin, as represented by Rome and the Churches in communion with her, is falling behind in the third. Not we ourselves, but those who come after must declare of us whether we, into whose hands the lamp of faith has now passed, shall have run aright the race set before us; whether we shall have accomplished the glorious destiny placed within our reach, but which only too easily we may miss. It is yet to be seen if England, this Esther which has been so marvellously exalted to one of the imperial thrones of the world, will listen to the voice that is saying to her, 'Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?' or if the kingdom shall be taken away from her, and given to some other who shall know how to make better use of such grand opportunities as now are hers.

It is with the second of the three periods thus marked out that in this present course of Lectures we have to do. We start with the Pontificate of Gregory the Great (b. 540, d. 604). Let us seek to take a brief oversight of the main features which Western Christendom presented, when he was called to the helm of the sorely tossed ship of the Church, and trace with this some chief aspects of his own work. And first let me observe that, whether for good or for evil, he must be accepted as the true founder of the Medieval Papacy. It is a source of infinite confusion, and throws back the historic existence of the Papacy to a period at which, in its later developments, it did not exist at all, when we speak of a Pope before the time of Gregory. None, of course, would deny that the Bishop of Rome bore that title before; but he only bore it, as all other Bishops did. It was not till about the sixth century that the title began to be restricted to one Bishop of the West; this restriction being, no doubt, an

indication that the difference between him and other Bishops was so making itself felt as to demand an utterance and expression in words.

Much, no doubt, in the circumstances of the world around wrought together for the marking out of the difference between him and all those others whose office was not in itself inferior to his own, and for giving a new emphasis to this difference ; yet in the main it was the virtues of Gregory, these seconded, it is true, by his rare gifts of government, which gave to the office that he held so far higher a significance, and so much greater a weight than ever it had possessed before. Those virtues were indeed eminent, and endured the proof, being tried to the uttermost in a very evil time. For in truth the prospect which the Church in his day presented, to whatever side he turned, was so dark and threatening that it could scarcely have been involved in a deeper gloom. After long wars which had utterly wasted Italy, and left Rome itself little better than a desert, famine and pestilence consuming what the sword had spared ; after troubles and confusions which had loosened or quite dissolved the bands of ecclesiastical discipline, the Byzantine Emperors, thanks to the genius of Belisarius and Narses, had recovered their Italian dominions (553), though presently to lose for ever the larger part of them again. This meant that the Bishop of Rome was once more their subject ; and if, out of prudential motives, treated sometimes with a certain deference, yet not secure from the worst outrages and indignities, should he fail to jump with all the shifting doctrinal humours of the Byzantine Court. Nor was this a mere chimerical danger by which they were threatened. One of Gregory's successors, Martin I., refusing to conform to the changing moods of the Imperial theology, was sent in chains to the East, was put there on his trial, and being

condemned, endured the worst which the malice of foes could devise (655).

But there were dangers nearer and more urgent. It was but a few years before Gregory's elevation that the Lombards, a Teutonic tribe, and the last of these which settled in the western territories of the Roman Empire, pressed upon by other tribes in their previous seats to the North-East, had occupied those fertile plains of Upper Italy to which they have bequeathed a name that has long survived their comparatively short-lived dominion there (568-744). These Lombards were still Arians; but though their Arianism sat loosely upon them, it was excuse or motive enough for every sort of fanatic outrage on the Catholic faith and the holders of it; while from one cause or another they were less accessible to the humanizing influences of Roman culture than any other of the Teutonic tribes. Rome and the Roman Bishop were in constant danger from them. Tardy and insufficient was any help which could be looked for from the Exarch or Imperial Viceroy at Ravenna. The Emperor could oppress, but was helpless to protect; while the star of deliverance which, rising in the land of the Franks, should bring freedom to the Church at once from the Greek and the Lombard, was not yet visible above the horizon.

Nor was the outlook beyond much more encouraging. In the conversion of the Arian Goths in Spain and of Reccared their king to the Catholic faith (587) was almost the one gleam of light and comfort which Gregory, as he looked around him, could anywhere have detected. Frightful calamities following hard upon one another had reduced the once glorious North African Church to a faint shadow of what once it had been, that shadow itself in less than a century wholly to disappear (670). The line



of the Danube and the Rhine, lost to the Church during the wild anarchy of the preceding centuries, was only being slowly regained ; while the serried strength of Teutonic heathenism beyond remained unassailed as yet ; and, until its strength had been effectually broken by the stronger hand of Charles the Great, was an abiding menace to civilized and Christian Europe. Of England, for the most part heathen still, I shall speak in another Lecture.

In the East the prospects of the Church were not more cheerful. The long ignoble agony of Byzantine Christianity had fairly begun. The Council of Chalcedon (451), while it renewed the Church's protest against Nestorianism, so chilly and rationalistic, had condemned no less the more spiritual errors of Eutyches and the Monophysites ; but its wise moderation had profited little. That middle position between naturalism and enthusiasm which the Church had assumed served only to expose it to assaults alike on the one side and on the other. The decisions which should have been the end, proved unhappily rather a new beginning of strife, or at any rate served as a new departure for it. In some parts of the Empire, as notably in Egypt, and we may say generally in the non-Hellenic provinces, the Monophysites far outnumbered the Catholics, these and those furiously raging against one another ; while the Emperors, Justinian and his successors, seeking with their ' Patterns ' and ' Expositions ' to compose the quarrel, but meddling as arbiters in a conflict which was not to be settled by Imperial decrees, only inflamed the strife which they thought to allay ; and thus all was ripening for that tremendous catastrophe, that judgment-doom upon the Eastern Church, which, unguessed as yet by any mortal man, was even then at the door. The Arabian camel-driver who should change the whole face of the East was some twenty years old when Gregory was

called to the Pontificate (590) ; he had reached his thirty-fourth or thirty-fifth year when Gregory died (604), though it was not till some seven years later that he began openly to proclaim his mission.

And yet we may say boldly that had the gift of prophecy been added to the many gifts which Gregory possessed, had he known all that was even then so near, this knowledge would not have shaken his confidence that the kingdom of God is the one kingdom which cannot be moved ; even as in this faith he did so much to bear up the pillars of a tottering Church and world. Whether he was fully aware that old things were passing away, and about to make room for new, may very well be a question ; as it is always a question whether the primary actors in such mighty transformations as that which the Western world was already undergoing, and for which the Eastern world was ripe, are themselves fully conscious of them ; but certainly both in what he wrote and in what he did, there are tokens of a sense upon his part of an old time overlived, of a new time beginning. Thus it may seem but a small matter, yet in fact is very significant, that he should announce in the Preface to his chief theological work that he did not intend to embarrass himself or his readers by any painful adherence to the grammatical laws of the Latin language. Much utters itself here. Plainly he has turned his back, so far as this was possible, on the old Greek and Roman world. The foremost man of his age, classical literature does not interest him in the least ; he has only rebukes for a Bishop whom it does interest. Then, too, the credulity which in the Middle Ages so often took the place of faith, which failed to draw any line of distinction between history and legend, is only too strong in him. In his own writings may already be detected germs of errors that appear full-blown in a later age.

All this must be freely admitted, while yet, when all is said, he must be owned to complete, and worthily to complete, the grand quaternion of the recognized Doctors of the Latin Church, and to close the list of these. Nor is this all. So many changes in the service-book of the Church have found place during the twelve hundred years which have since run their course, that it is easier in general terms to acknowledge the largeness of our debt to Pope Gregory, as first and greatest of liturgic innovators and reformers, organizer of the Church's worship as it never had been organized before, than to define exactly wherein that debt consists. Only I will mention that to him we owe that plain song or chant, which still bears his name; and which, if it wanted the freshness, the movement, the popularity of the Ambrosian melodies displaced by it, very far surpassed them in dignity and solemnity; while it broke definitively away from all of Greek and Pagan which still lingered about and haunted those other.

But if the whole Latin Church owes him so much, there is a peculiar and special benefit for which English men and women are his debtors, and which we should prove most unthankful if we forgot or suffered to fall out of sight, this namely,—that, regarding as part of his high commission to take oversight of the heathen world, to reduce under spiritual culture the outfield of the nations, he saw and seized the opportunity for reannexing England to Western Christendom, from which it had now for nearly two hundred years been violently torn away. The Conversion of England, by Gregory auspicated and begun, will furnish the subject of my next Lecture.

## LECTURE III.

*THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND.*

THE conquest of Britain by the Saxons and Angles, and their own settlement in the conquered land, differed in some most important features from corresponding events in other countries which had, like Britain, once formed part of the Roman Empire. In other lands it was a forcible taking possession of the soil by the intrusive race, who thrust out the old occupants from such parts of it as pleased them best; and this extrusion was no doubt carried through with no small amount of violence and of suffering to the conquered people. At the same time, as Guizot showed long ago, it is easy to exaggerate the amount of this suffering; and one thing is beyond doubt, namely, that there was no extermination, in our modern sense of the word, nor yet any complete displacement of one nation by another; that a *modus vivendi* was discovered, and the conquering and the conquered races contrived to subsist side by side; nay, more than this, that the conquering accepted before very long the language, the civilization, and in the end the religion of the conquered. It had been quite otherwise here. There had been no attempt at any transaction of the kind between the Saxon and the Briton. The invaders made a thorough clearance of the land as they advanced, winning their way now swiftly, now slowly, and at times coming to a stand. What remained of the British popu-

lation, all which had not perished in a stubborn but unavailing resistance, was pushed westward and northward ; to West Wales, that is to Cornwall, to North Wales, or Wales as we should call it now, and to other the northern parts of the Island. Britain, or England as we must name it henceforth, was paganized anew. A wedge of heathenism, thrust in between Christian Ireland and the Christian continent of Western Europe, it kept these asunder, and was itself completely cut off from any share in their higher and better life.

To Gregory the Great we owe the foundation of the mission by which England was restored to a place in the commonwealth of Christian nations. I pass by, though not as questioning its truth, the tender and graceful story of the Angles and the Angels, of Deira and De Irâ, of Ella and Hallelujah ; and of the first impulses to a noble work found in these significant plays upon words. It will be sufficient for me to remind you how this illustrious Bishop of the Western Church saw that the time had arrived for drawing once more within the pale of Christendom this Island, which had been lost to it so long ; recognized in the marriage of Ethelbert, King of Kent—King, that is, of the most civilized part of the land, and in a sense overlord of the whole—to Bertha, a Frankish and thus a Christian Princess, an opening afforded which should not be neglected. It was not a sudden thought. The English mission, with its toils and dangers and honours, he had once hoped to appropriate to himself. But, raised to his present dignity, he must be content to select another, the Roman Abbot Augustine, who should make good that lack of service upon his own part which now was unavoidable. With him he associated nearly forty companions more. Hitherto the Benedictines, with all their merits, had shown little missionary activity ; but the germs

of a magnificent future in this line of things were by this act of the Roman Pontiff planted in them. Need I tell you how he cheered, encouraged, and rebuked his missionaries, when these, having gotten as far as Gaul, would fain have turned back, terrified by the reports which they heard of the people to whom they were sent, 'a people of a fierce countenance, whose language they could not understand?' Familiar also to us all is the story of the favourable reception which they found, such as must have made them profoundly ashamed of their unfaithful fears; King Ethelbert himself before very long accepting the yoke of Christ (597), and drawing after him, as was the ever-recurring feature of these conversions, his chiefs and others nearest to his throne, who in their turn drew after them the mass of the people.

Augustine, satisfied that a genuine work had begun, journeys as far as France; is there, according to the instructions which he has received, consecrated by the Pope's Vicar, Vergilius, Metropolitan of Arles. Returning to England, he uses his liberty in selecting Canterbury as the future ecclesiastical centre of the land, and not London; which Gregory, with his imperfect knowledge of the actual political conditions of England and the division of its kingdoms, had designed and named; but which at this time was in fact inaccessible as being heathen still. And now some additional helpers joined him from Rome, with assistance in other shapes from the Pope, who watched with a tender and anxious solicitude over the Church which he had planted. Nor did he omit to send to Augustine the pall, at once a token of the archiepiscopal dignity wherewith he was now clothed, and of his holding this as the direct gift of the Pope. But more valuable than all the rest were the wise monitions with which the large-hearted Pontiff, who knew his man, ac-

accompanied his gifts, urging as he did upon him that he should not push too far his demands of an exact conformity to Roman rules and usages in things indifferent on the part of his new converts; seeing that none, accustomed to the old, straightway desire the new. Whatever anywhere he found of good and edifying, let him adopt and make it his own. Augustine had ample scope and opportunity before long for the exercise of that wisdom and moderation by Gregory enjoined on him here; but it must be owned that the opportunity was missed, and the admonition laid very imperfectly to heart. A good man, Augustine was also a narrow and unconciliatory. The grand breadth and tolerance, at least in things secondary, of Gregory would in vain be looked for in him. On a review of his whole career, we have no choice but to say that, as will sometimes happen, the work was grander than the man who wrought the work, that he did not so much achieve greatness, as have greatness thrust upon him. No other judgment about him is possible.

Augustine, as I have said already, found England in the main a heathen land; and yet not so but that British Christians and a British Church existed still. The Teutonic invaders had destroyed all which they could destroy in the deserted Roman province, but had not been able to make a clean sweep of Christianity from the Island. Augustine felt it most desirable to come to some understanding with the heads of the British Church. He hoped that these, acknowledging his authority, and with this, of course, that of his sender, might be underworkers with him for the evangelizing of the English people; a work not to be accomplished by the little band which he had brought with him, and the scanty reinforcements which had subsequently joined him. But the task of associating British and Roman missionaries in a common work was

one most difficult and delicate, and, with all which we owe to Augustine, it must be freely allowed that he was not the man to effect it. On the other hand, it can as little be affirmed of the British Christians that they yearned to take that glorious revenge on their Anglo-Saxon enemies which was placed within their reach. These or the ancestors of these had despoiled them of earth; they were little disposed in return to help their spoilers to heaven. The attempt, however, to arrange terms of co-operation was made. Augustine got together a Synod at which a certain number of the British Bishops were induced to attend; but these, offended at his assumption, refused to accept the Roman rule for the keeping of Easter, or otherwise to submit to the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, of which they declared that they had not heard before, and which, hearing of now, they repudiated altogether. It was not very wonderful that this attempt at reconciliation, or, to describe it more accurately, this summons to submission, did not close the rent and rift between the Churches, but rather left it wider than before. Yet the fault was very far from being all on one side; thus Laurentius, Augustine's successor, complains that a British Bishop would not eat with him, nor so much as take food under the same roof.

Let me note here that it is altogether a mistake, though a very common one, to assume that the difference about Easter, which did so much to keep the Churches asunder, was a revival of the old dispute between the Churches of Asia Minor (Ephesus above all) and the rest of Christendom—the same which had been settled at the Council of Nicæa; and it is error reared upon error to adduce this as a proof that Britain had received its Christianity from the East. It is just possible that this may have been the case, but there is no evidence for it here.



In the Churches of Asia Minor, which professed to follow the tradition of St. John, the method of calculation, fundamentally distinct from that of the West, was such that the Easter festival might fall upon any day in the week. Nothing of the kind could possibly happen in the British, whose Easter basis of calculation, if I may so call it, was identical with that of Rome. The only difference between them was, that in the application of a rule common to both, the other Churches of the West and Rome at their head, not being cut off from the superior astronomical knowledge of Alexandria, had learned from time to time to make allowance for certain disturbing facts, and had adjusted their calendar to these. The British Church meanwhile, separated for long years from the science of the Christian world, had failed to make the corrections in her calendar which were necessary, if Easter was to preserve its proper place. Other points of divergence there were, though none among them assumed the significance of this; thus a different fashion of the tonsure, the British preserving that from ear to ear, and not adopting till 718 the *coronal* tonsure of Rome, the token of the priest's possession of a kingly dignity.

The centre of interest shifts after Augustine's death, of which the exact year is not certainly known (cir. 605), from the little kingdom of Kent, wherein alone his very moderate missionary successes were obtained, to the more important kingdom of Northumbria. There King Edwin, he too married to a Christian princess, after long hesitation is won for the truth (627), to which he loyally cleaves, and for which in the end he lays down his life. For the victory was not yet won; and, whatever may have been the triumphs thus far of the Gospel in the land, England was not converted or nearly converted yet. If

the truth goes forth 'conquering and to conquer,' yet it has its defeats, its dark days, before the day of a complete triumph arrives. The corn of wheat must die, or appear to die, before it bears much fruit. It seems indeed an almost universal law of missionary work, that the definitive victory is not won without a temporary reaction more or less severe. The powers of darkness, seen and unseen, the spiritual wickednesses which constitute the true background of every form of heathenism, these, with all whom they can enlist in their service, gather themselves up, as with the energy of despair, for a last and decisive struggle with the kingdom of light. A tempest of wrath and wrong sweeps over the Church, and the patient work of years perishes, or appears to perish, in an hour. So fared it, though not to the full extent, in the Roman Empire. A Constantine might seem to have brought, but did not indeed bring, all to a happy end; there must still be a Julian and an apostasy before a Theodosius comes, and effectually does what Constantine had only appeared to do. And so fares it in cases innumerable. Ansgar must prove the truth of this in Sweden. Hungary twice relapses into heathenism, even after a St. Stephen had sat upon its throne. In our own days we have seen something of the same kind in New Zealand and Madagascar. It was not otherwise in Anglo-Saxon England of old. The fierce pagan King of Mercia, Penda by name, heads the heathen reaction; and when Edwin falls in battle, it might seem as though with him had fallen the whole imposing but unstable edifice of Christianity in the north of the Island (633).

But Christ is mightier than Woden. The work, arrested for a while, goes forward again. Yet it is not the band of Italian monks, who are too few, nor yet missionaries from the British Church in Wales, who have

too little heart for the task, by whom the conversion of northern England shall be accomplished. Other evangelists, and these from quite a different quarter, appear upon the scene, and take up the uncompleted work ; and to them the chief glory of it must belong. To the Celtic monks, who were also the travellers, the scholars, the missionaries of the sixth, the seventh, and the eighth centuries, England, and indeed all North-Western Europe, owes a debt of gratitude which is hardly as yet acknowledged to the full. Bede, though writing altogether from the Roman point of view, bears honourable witness to the single-mindedness and devotion with which they addressed themselves to the missionary work. Two hundred years had elapsed since St. Patrick died ; but he had left multitudes behind him, his lineal spiritual descendants, in whose hearts was burning the same sacred fire which had once burned so brightly in his own. Not a few of these, passing over from Ireland, had chosen the little storm-beaten island of Iona among the Western Hebrides, with the hope that from it as from a centre might radiate the light of God's truth into all the darkness beyond ; nor were they disappointed in their hope.

On all those points of discipline and ritual observance on which the British Church of Wales was at issue with Rome, they were at issue no less ; but there was nothing in their past history to estrange them from the English as the Britons were estranged ; and they threw themselves with a will, not one by one, but by troops and companies, into the work which was before them ; Aidan, called the Apostle of Northumbria, gentle, and winning souls by the gentleness of Christ, leading the way (d. 651). The points of difference and divergence between these and the missionaries who had received their commission from Rome, came into no perplexing prominence so long as

their several spheres of labour, north and south, lay mainly apart from each other. But when, by the very successes which attended their labours, the northern and southern missions came to touch, as before very long they did, the crisis, sooner or later inevitable, arrived, and the question demanded to be determined, whether Celtic or Roman Christianity should be paramount in the land. It was a question which hung for a while in the balance. Rome triumphed in the end. We may regard the Council of Whitby (663) as the turning point. At this, we are told, the upholders of the Roman celebration of Easter and of the British severally pleaded before Oswy, then the most powerful monarch in the Heptarchy. He, being assured by the advocates of the Roman use that this was according to the mind of St. Peter, and that St. Peter had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to admit or to exclude whom he would, did not think it prudent to put himself in opposition to one so powerful, and declared for this use.

Assuredly the manifold significance of the choice which he thus was making can have only dimly and faintly dawned on him; but it ought not to escape us, who read it in the light which more than a thousand years throw back upon it. 'It was,' as has been said, 'the end of the Scotie ascendancy, the triumph of the "Catholic Easter" and of other continental Church usages, the opening of a free communication with Latin Christianity properly so called. There was good in this, and also some evil. The Latinising process gave system and order, and organized and concentrated force, and a certain magnificence which could teach great lessons through the imagination, and overawe rough natures as by the visible presence of a kingdom supreme over lord and churl alike. That the Latin tone and spirit also fostered superstitious

and spiritual despotism, and that the tightening of links to Rome had some ill effects on English Church freedom, are positions which medieval history puts far above all doubt' (Bright).

The tide of popular favour set from this time forward ever more and more strongly in the direction of Rome; which little by little triumphed not in England only, but in Ireland and Scotland as well, until Iona, the latest stronghold of Celtic Christianity, was itself won (716). Many, it is true, of the more ardent and independent spirits among the Celtic missionaries refused to accept the yoke and to bow to the obedience of Rome. Seeing no place for them here any more, they crossed the seas to found, or where this was already done, to strengthen and extend, the Mission Churches in Frisia and Northern Germany, which their brethren had already founded. A grand career was open to them there, and they were not wanting to it; while yet in the end the same issues which the conflict had found in England, it found also abroad. The struggle with Rome was again renewed on the German soil, and with the same results. By the year 743, thanks mainly to Boniface,—of whom in another Lecture,—Roman Christianity was everywhere in the ascendant there. The work of the Celtic missionaries was with their God.

Owning as we must that there were precious truths held with clearness by the Celtic Church, or Church of the Culdees, as you will often hear it named—truths which were already more or less obscured in the Roman, we are sometimes tempted to wish that the issue had been different. And yet it would be well to consider, Was there, in any Celtic Church which could then have been founded, what would have enabled it, or the England formed and fashioned under its influence, to endure the

tremendous strain of the next four hundred years? All was better as it was. The centuries which followed showed only too clearly the weak points of Celtic Christianity. Devoid of that unifying power, of that wonderful gift of order and organization which was the strength of the Roman, passionately throwing itself into tribal quarrels, and making them its own, it would have consumed itself in intestine strifes. Instead of offering a basis of unity for the land, and refusing to recognize, as the Roman Church refused to recognize, the rivalries and enmities of Northumbrian and Mercian and South-Saxon, it would have introduced new elements of discord and division; and that unity of England, anyhow so hard to win, and so long struggled for in vain, would have become well-nigh or altogether impossible. Neither could England, on the remote outer fringe, as it then was, of the civilized world, have afforded to be separated from the arts and culture of Western Europe, which all found their centre at Rome; and which, few and fragmentary as they were, were yet all that survived from the mighty wreck of old Greek and Latin civilization to carry the Church and the world through the dark and evil days that awaited both. At the same time, considerations such as these ought not to abate in the least our gratitude for all which we owe to these Celtic evangelists, who wrought so large a share in the conversion of England, and in whose experience that law of the kingdom of heaven, which none but envious niggards will grudge or will repine at, was so signally fulfilled, 'One soweth and another reapeth.'

I cannot close this sketch of the first founding of our English Church without honorable mention of one who did more than any other to bring into harmonious working order and to knit into an organic whole what hitherto

had been little more than a mere assemblage of isolated missions. Theodore of Tarsus, philosopher and divine, trained in the East, but having accepted a mission from the Pope (669), is deservedly an illustrious name in our ecclesiastical annals. To him we probably owe the first rude outlines of our parochial system. It was he who recast, according to later needs, the episcopal divisions of the land, which had been originally co-extensive with the kingdoms of the Heptarchy. If much has since perished of his arrangements—and the Danish Invasion swept a great deal away—not a little still survives to the present hour. The victory of Roman over Celtic Christianity was already practically decided when he came; but he did much to reconcile the victors and the vanquished, a Wilfrid, ‘of great parts and greater passions,’ as Fuller has it, and a Chad, clothed with that grace of humility which Wilfrid sometimes lacked; nor shall we ascribe to Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, too high an honour, if we regard him as in some sort a second founder of the English Church, giving to it broader and safer foundations than an Augustine, or those who wrought merely in the spirit, at once narrow and timid, of Augustine, could have ever given.

Having brought this story thus far, to the events which determined the future character of the Church in this land, I must renounce any attempt to follow it further; and content myself with calling your attention to a few of the leading aspects which it presents, until such time as, with the Norman Conquest, our English Church may be said to have taken a new departure. Certainly it had accomplished much in the first hundred and fifty years of its existence. There are brilliant pages in its annals. A nation of heathens had been converted, not by violence,

not by the sword, as the Saxons of the Continent should be, into a nation of Christians—most imperfectly converted, no doubt, but so that outwardly all save a few slight traces of heathendom had disappeared. There was much for which to thank God ; and yet, with all this, it must be freely admitted that it was very far in its later days from fulfilling the promise of an earlier time. None, it is true, with good right could call that tree a barren one which put forth such shoots as this did, which produced scholars and theologians such as Bede and Alcuin, a poet such as Cædmon, missionaries such as Willibrord and Boniface, saints such as St. Chad and St. Cuthbert, a statesman such as Dunstan, a king such as Alfred. But for all this, there are grave shadows resting on the Anglo-Saxon Church ; nor can these be sufficiently explained and their gravity extenuated by a reference to the terrible calamities which after a while overtook this Church, seeing that those calamities themselves can only be regarded as the just punishments of preceding sins.

There have been races which, under the transforming influences, primary and secondary, of the Gospel of Christ, have laid aside their inborn fierceness, yet without laying aside or losing the strength and energy of character, of which that fierceness had been the perverted utterance ; races which have brought all their native energy with them into that new and higher sphere in which now they moved, and have found room to exercise it there. Foremost among the races which thus kept all they before had that was worth the keeping, while adding much to this, which only that higher civilization by Christianity rendered possible could give, were the Normans. These, as their name attests, were Northmen once, Scandinavian pirates, with all the tameless strength of those wild and adventurous sea-robbers ; who settling themselves down here and



there, as in Neustria, in Calabria, in Sicily, in Greece, adopted the arts, the creed, the language of those among whom they settled, with whatever of rarer or finer culture those might own ; but who did all this without bating one jot of their original vigour, manhood and love of adventure. An aspiring race they were, subtle and crafty ; yet not relying on these serpentine gifts alone ; but strong also to do and to dare ; the most brilliant chivalry of Europe ; hewing out with the sword principalities and kingdoms for themselves, as was shown upon many a famous field and day ; and chiefly on that field of Senlac and day of St. Calixtus, field and day most memorable of all, when the Saxon battle-axes went down at even before the Norman spears, and the fate of England for long centuries, we may be bold to say for all time, was determined (1066).

But of Angles and Saxons it must be owned, that if they gained much when they bowed to the yoke of Christ, there was also something which they might have kept, but did at the same time let go. Among the grave shadows at which I hinted just now, I certainly will not reckon the devotion felt and shown by the English Church to the distant mother that bore her. And yet it must be freely allowed that this devotion, romantic, childlike, and happily ignorant of much which would have tried it severely, was not always bestowed wisely or well. Its existence none can contest. Among all the Teutonic tribes, the English, being once converted, proved the most devoted children of the Church. More than thirty kings and queens descended from the throne to end their days in cloistral retreats. It would be difficult to number the other scions of noble houses, and of both sexes, who thus sought to win heaven by the abandonment at once of the pomps and duties of earth. From no other western land were pilgrimages to the thresholds of the Apostles, of rich and

poor, of male and female—these often for the latter attended with the most disastrous moral results, as Bede assures us—so frequent or so numerous. From no other land did there flow into the Papal exchequer such rich contributions. Peter's Pence, if afterwards adopted by others, was an English invention at the first. The Anglo-Saxon Church had certainly deserved better than that, after centuries of such devotion, the Norman invader should go forth for its overthrow under a banner, as he did, consecrated by Papal hands.

The monks had converted England. It was thus inevitable that the monastic element should be strong throughout the whole of Anglo-Saxon life, from the throne to the cottage should pervade it all. This was natural and, in a land newly converted and only little by little to be weaned from innumerable heathen superstitions and idolatries, was not in itself to be regretted. Still, a submission to these influences might easily be overdone, and many years had not elapsed before it was overdone. It was not very long before all or nearly all of the public lands were alienated for ever to churches and monasteries, till little or nothing remained with which to recompense those whose strong arms and courageous hearts had shielded, or should hereafter shield, the throne and uphold the State. Under whatever obligations to military service these lands may have been held, every such alienation must have diminished the number of those who should have borne arms in the country's defence. The thane, whose place was in the forefront of the battle, had assumed the tonsure, oftentimes his sons with him. England was fast becoming a nation of monks. A genuine piety, however ill-directed, may have had its share here; but love of ease, an ignoble shrinking from the task and toil of life, had also their share in developing this cloistral religion in

a manner so excessive. Bede, when as yet the danger was remote, had already asked with anxiety what would be the end and issue of these insane gifts, of this forgetfulness of arms and all martial exercises on their parts who were the natural defenders and guardians of their native land. It did not take very long to show what this end would be.

Keep all these things in mind, and also the fact, not to be denied, that there was a coarse animalism, a sluggish self-indulgence, from which the Anglo-Saxon temperament was not free, and which such unworthy withdrawals from toil and from danger must have done much to foster and feed, and you have in good part an explanation here of the frightful calamities that in the eighth and ninth centuries overtook Christian England, of the faint and ineffectual resistance that the spoilers and destroyers who made it their prey encountered. A people such as this needed to be emptied from vessel to vessel, if they were not hopelessly to settle down upon their lees. The needful discipline was not wanting. The Dane first, and the Norman after him, were stern but effectual reminders that men cannot with impunity leave unfulfilled the duties to which God has called them, whatever else in the way of will-worship they may substitute in their room. These reminders were not altogether thrown away, thanks above all others to Alfred the Great (871-901). Many precious boons we owe to him, but this the most precious, because it included or made possible all other, namely, that the Danish invasion was a scourge and no more, that the very life of Christian England was not crushed out by it; as might very well have been, if a monarch of less heroic mould, if one who could only pray, a monk at heart, and not one who could both pray and fight, had sat upon the throne at this crisis of England's fate. Restorer and reviver of Christian life and learning in the land, sober,

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dauntless, resolute, patient, his spirit lived in his son and grandson ; scarcely indeed the men of faith that he was, but in many aspects splendid sovereigns, who saw clearly the work which was for them to do, and who did it.

There were no grand characters among churchmen in the later days of the Anglo-Saxon Church to correspond to these. Milman's judgment is severe, but not more severe than true :—' The Anglo-Saxon Clergy, since the days of Dunstan, had produced no remarkable man. The triumph of monasticism had enfeebled without sanctifying the secular clergy ; it had spread over the Island all its superstition, its thralldom of the mind, its reckless prodigality of lands and riches to pious uses, without its vigour, its learning, its industrial civilization. Like its faithful disciple, its humble acolyte, its munificent patron, Edward the Confessor, it might conceal much gentle and amiable goodness ; but its outward character was that of timid and unworldly ignorance, unfit to rule, and exercising but feeble and unbeneficial influence over a population become at once more rude and fierce, and more oppressed and servile, by the Danish Conquest.'

Let me in conclusion invite you to observe how the work of the conversion of England exactly corresponded in time with the first triumphant advance of the Mahomedan arms. Pertaining as these events severally do, the one to the extreme West, the other to the further East, we may easily miss their connexion, might find it hard to recognize that such connexion existed at all. And yet, in the providence of God, the one was set over against the other ; and the West was knitting itself into the strength and unity which it would need for that collision with the great heretical impiety of the East, which sooner or later was certain to arrive. It is the rise of Islâm with which in my next Lecture I shall deal.

## LECTURE IV.

*ISLÁM.*

WHILE the Church was making these spiritual conquests in the West, securely planting herself in regions which should henceforward form her most flourishing seats, organizing herself under a single head, dark clouds were gathering and a tempest brewing in the East, from a quarter where beforehand they might least have been looked for. Nor were these merely transient perils, the devastations of an hour or a day. The regions which had been her earliest haunt and home, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa, these all within little more than a century were torn from her; neither did the losses of that earlier time at all exhaust the losses which she was thus destined to endure. It was from Arabia that the storm thus suddenly broke upon the Church, which was forcibly to rend away so many of her fairest branches. Up to this time Arabia had played little or no part in the world's history. Satisfied with maintaining their own independence—and with only some partial and recent exceptions they had defied or eluded the attempts of the mightiest conquerors to place a yoke upon their necks,—the children of Ishmael had hitherto dwelt apart in their solitary world. From this they were now to break forth, and profoundly to stamp themselves, their manners, their customs, their faith, on a large and important portion of the globe, and to win for the faith

which they professed the devoted adhesion of some seventh part of its inhabitants.

The Arabs had been, so far back as history knows anything about them, a free, warlike people, thinly scattered over their immense peninsula, their tribes oftentimes at war among themselves, oftentimes at war with their neighbours ; if, indeed, the freebooting excursions to which they were addicted deserved so honourable a name. Whatever original knowledge of the one God they may have possessed had been gradually overclouded and lost. In the times of their ignorance—for so the Musselmans fondly term the period before their prophet rose, and brought them back to the primitive patriarchal faith—the land had been full of idols and of idolaters, Sabæan star-worshippers and others. Nor did the presence of a considerable colony of Jews in Arabia, and of some Christians as well, do much to dispel the darkness of idolatry which brooded over the land. With scanty and imperfect knowledge of their own faith, entangled in manifold superstitions and errors, these Jews and Christians were alike little fitted to be witnesses against the superstitions and errors of others. Such very briefly was the political and religious condition of Arabia when Mahomet was born (569 or 571).

Mecca was the place of his birth. Of his early life legend knows much, history very little. He belonged, though himself poor, to one of the noblest tribes in the land, to that, namely, of the Koreishites. To the members of this tribe appertained some not very clearly defined sacerdotal privileges ; among others the guardianship of the Caaba, a heathen sanctuary or temple, which had been the Holy Place of the Arabs long before Mahomet, adopting and weaving it into his religious scheme, gave to it its second consecration as the middle point of Ma-

homedan worship. His youth excited no special remark. Too poor to carry on commercial affairs upon his own account, he transacted those of a rich widow, and this with such fidelity and prosperous issues, that after a while she bestowed upon him her hand and her fortune. The affairs in which he was thus engaged involved many journeys, and brought him in contact with men of various countries and diverse faiths ; for Mecca was the centre of an active commerce, and sent out its caravans eastward and southward through the whole Arabian peninsula, and to many regions beyond. Twice he visited Syria. It was probably on one of these journeys that he fell in with that mysterious Nestorian monk, who plays a part alike in the Mahomedan and Christian tradition of his life, but whose relations with him are wrapt in an obscurity so deep. From him, as some will have it, Mahomet obtained whatever measure of acquaintance with things Jewish and Christian he possessed. His knowledge, indeed, of these, however gotten, was small, fragmentary, and inaccurate—ridiculously inaccurate one might call it, were not the whole rise of Islâm too terrible an event for the human race to allow the employment of such a word—a knowledge not derived from the Scriptures themselves, but from sources the most turbid, from Talmudic legends and apocryphal gospels, and, as we may confidently affirm, not drawn at first hand even from these.

Such a portentous birth as a new religion, and that religion a false one, could scarcely come to pass without labour-pangs corresponding. It did not so here. Of much we must remain ignorant ; but this much we know, that in or about his fortieth year Mahomet began to listen to secret intimations that there was a divine mission for him to fulfil ; while there did not want other whispers that these suggestive voices were not from above, but below.

The crisis of his life had arrived ; fleeing from men, hiding in mountain caves, deeply sunken in religious reverie—epileptic fits his enemies would have it—seeing visions and dreaming dreams, now lifted up as to heaven, and now cast down as to hell, it was only after a long interior conflict that his life wrought itself out for him into any distinctness of purpose, and that he began to declare, as God's message by him to the world, There is no god but God, and Mahomet is his prophet (611).

And yet something of the course by which he had been led thus far I think we can trace. Doubtless in the years which went before he had been deeply impressed with the moral and spiritual degradation of his country. There are many clear tokens that amid all the darkness of idolatry, all the falsehoods with which the land was full, a sense of the unity of the Godhead had not been quite obliterated from the minds of his fellow-countrymen. It revived in strength in his own. He saw truly what lay at the root of all their miseries and dissensions, of tribe evermore at war with tribe, and family with family ; namely, that faith in a common Lord, the only true bond which can bind men together, was wanting. He saw that their very worship, being as it was the worship of things which were beneath them, and not of One who was above, instead of drawing upward, did itself only drag them down and debase them the more.

It was the custom until very lately never to name Mahomet without some opprobrious addition to his name—‘ the impostor Mahomet,’ ‘ the Arabian false prophet ;’ while, if I do not mistake, the pendulum is now swaying in an opposite direction, and we may soon have Mahomet placed on a level with Moses—at the least, and the Korân, if a lower revelation than the Bible, pronounced a divine revelation still. The truth, as I am bold to affirm, is



neither here nor there. If by 'impostor' we understand, and we can scarcely understand less, one who devised a cunningly constructed system of fraud and falsehood, which then, with the full consciousness that it was such, he sought to impose upon others, impostor Mahomet was not. Deceiver I believe that he often was, but only where, not of course without his own sin, he was himself first deceived. On any scheme of simple and self-conscious imposture it is altogether impossible to explain the results of his preaching, which has changed the face of so large a part of the world, given birth to a religion which for many centuries contended as on equal terms with the Christian ; and which, if waning now like the moon that is its symbol, yet still subsists a mighty power and passion, filling the hearts, and moulding the lives, of millions of our fellow men. 'Lies,' as our proverb declares, 'have no legs ;' at all events lies that are nothing else but lies have not legs which will carry them through some twelve hundred years and more. Instead of dismissing without more ado this religion as a lie, and its founder as an impostor, it will profit us more to ask ourselves what were the sources of its strength, to divide, as far as this may be, the light from the darkness in the man and in the faith, and to do such justice to both as they have a right to demand.

But first to follow to its close the outward history of the man. His claims to the prophetic office are met by contemptuous indifference, and then by bitter hostility, no where so bitter as at Mecca ; for he too is a prophet who finds no honour in his own country. Driven from thence at length by the persistent enmity of his own tribe, and hardly escaping with his life, he and the few whom he has persuaded to believe in his mission take refuge at Medina, not so named before, but now

acquiring this name of The City—the city, that is, of the prophet. This was in 622, some eleven years after he had begun to preach. The year is worth remembering, for the Hegira, or Flight to Medina, is the Mahomedan era, the date from which they reckon, as we do from the Nativity of our Lord. At Medina he found the belief which had been refused him at Mecca. New adherents united themselves to him. Early friends, scattered from him at the time of his flight, gathered round him again. The Koreishites, indeed, still pursued him with implacable hate, and many battles were fought with varying success; these, it is true, being little more than skirmishes which grew out of the waylaying of caravans and similar marauding expeditions. But with all this his cause was gaining ground, the number of his adherents increasing and when in 632 he expired, all Arabia recognized him as her prophet and her king; and he who at the first had aspired, at the utmost, to the giving of a law to his own people, did now, his horizon having widened with his success, bequeath to the Chalifs, his successors, the task of subduing the world to the faith which he had proclaimed. God, he said, had long tried gentleness, the meekness of Christ;—for he did not deny the divine mission of our Lord, nor yet that of Moses, but always assumed these, and his own mission as the complement of theirs;—but now, wearied out with the obstinacy of sinners, He commanded that they should either accept the true faith; or yield themselves tributary to those who had accepted; or, refusing both these alternatives, should be destroyed as rebels against the Lord of heaven and earth.

The task which Mahomet left to those who came after him to accomplish, they prosecuted with a zeal

and a success which for a while seemed to threaten the establishment of the faith of Islām on the ruins of every other religion in the world. Terrible indeed was the first outburst of the children of the desert from regions where they had been cooped and confined so long; the first carrying out of that war against mankind which in effect their prophet had proclaimed. The two acknowledged powers of the East, the Byzantine and the Persian Empires, each with an able monarch at its head, Heraclius (610–641) and Chosroes (d. 628), had been weakening one another by alternate victories and defeats. Each in turn had brought the other to the very brink of destruction; little dreaming the while that a power was growing up in secret which was watching them both, and in the end should destroy them both, and one within a few years. On some of the fairest and most flourishing of the Asiatic provinces of the Byzantine Empire the storm fell first. Exhausted by those long wars with Persia, defended by ill-paid mercenaries, swarming with persecuted sectaries, with oppressed Jews, with subjects disaffected from one cause or another and only too well pleased to change their master, that Empire was wholly unequal to resist the shock. Ten years had not elapsed since the death of the prophet, and already Palestine and Syria and Egypt had accepted the yoke; already three out of the four famous patriarchates of Eastern Christendom—Jerusalem (636) and Antioch (638) and Alexandria (641)—if not actually blotted out, retained little more than a merely titular existence. It wanted but a little that the fourth and last had shared their doom; for Constantinople itself, twice besieged by the Saracens (in 669, and again in 716), with difficulty weathered the first violence of the storm, and, except for the opportune invention of the Greek Fire, might have succumbed to Mahomedan

arms, not in the fifteenth century, but the seventh or the eighth.

The tide of conquest rolled onward. The Persian Empire ceased to exist (637–651). North Africa was subdued (665–709). Crossing over from this into Spain, the Arabs, or Moors as they were here called, from having assimilated to themselves the Moorish population of North Africa, overthrew in a single battle the kingdom of the Goths (711), surmounted the Pyrenees, planted themselves in Aquitaine, and threatened to make all France, and with France all Western Europe, their own. It was here at length that their proud waves were stayed: for it was here that they first came in conflict with races organized on a truer moral basis and therefore stronger than they were. At the famous battle called sometimes of Poitiers, and sometimes of Tours (732), one of the ‘decisive battles of the world’—for we must go back nearly three centuries, to the battle of Chalons (451), before we can find such another—Charles Martel encountered the armies of Islâm with the assembled chivalry of the West, and earned, or deserved to earn, his name of The Hammer, inflicting on them so crushing a defeat that for long centuries all their aggressive pressure upon Western Christendom was arrested, and, indeed, has never again revived in its full strength. Some indeed at this day extenuate the importance which has for long been ascribed to this victory as an arrest of the onward march of Mahomedan conquest; and claim for Leo the Isaurian, of whom we shall hear more anon, that his overthrow of the Saracen hosts which besieged Constantinople (716) was the real shattering of the aggressive forces of Islâm in this century; but on this question I cannot enter.

How shall we explain these extraordinary successes, the going forth of this novel faith over the world, thus

bringing the world to its feet? It is not enough to appeal to the simple habits of the conquerors, their hardy training, their martial character ; while the populations with which they were brought into conflict were for the most part unwarlike and effeminate, enervated by luxury and self-indulgence, estranged by one cause or another from their natural rulers, and eager to accept almost any other in their stead. This might explain much, but it would not explain all, or nearly all. We must look for causes lying deeper. The Moslem hosts went forth in the confidence of a mission from heaven. Not Kaled only, but every Moslem warrior felt himself indeed to be 'The Sword of God.' Comparing what they now were with what they had been in those 'times of their ignorance,' when they worshipped dead idols, they felt that they had been brought into a new spiritual world, now at length had learned what was the true g'ory and dignity of man, namely, to be the servant of the one God, maker and ruler of all ; that such servants they were ; whose office it was to proclaim his power ; themselves submitting, and compelling others to submit, to his will. What a truth was here, to have taken possession of a multitude of souls ! No wonder that, in the strength of this, innumerable tribes, which had hitherto done little but mutually bite and devour one another, were presently knit together into a nation, and the worshippers of a thousand discordant falsehoods into a Society which bore some sort of similitude to a Church.

And then, if you would look further for an explanation, turn to the conquered. 'Where the carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together.' This is the law of God's dealings with men, with nations, and with Churches. Where they are abandoned by the spirit of life, and have thus become as a carcase, there the eagles, the executors

of the divine vengeance, are at hand, presently to remove out of the way that which, suffered any longer, could only taint the air and defile the earth. The Eastern Church was not altogether such a carcase, and therefore it did not wholly perish ; but yet we must needs confess that it had grievously provoked those terrible judgments which now fell upon it. How rent was it and torn by inner dissensions which men would not lay aside even in the presence of a common foe, hating one another so much that the triumph of that foe seemed infinitely preferable to the triumph of a rival Christian sect ; what mere strifes about words had taken the place of a zeal for holiness, and how fiercely were these debated ; how much of superstition was there everywhere ; how much which, if it was not idolatry, yet played most dangerously on the verge of this. We can regard Mahomedanism in no other light than as the scourge of God upon a guilty Church. He will not give his glory to another. He will not suffer the Creator and the creature to be confounded ; and if those who should have been witnesses for the truth, who had been appointed thereunto, forget, forsake, or deny it, He will raise up witnesses from quarters the most unlooked for, and will strengthen their hands and give victory to their arms, even against those who bear his name, but have forgotten his truth.

And yet, it may be very naturally asked, does this negative aspect of Mahomedanism exhaust its whole meaning ? had it no other purposes in the councils of God ? was it merely such a scourge as this ? for if so, why has it been permitted to exist for long centuries after this its proper work was accomplished ? The rods of God's anger are for the most part, in the order of his providence, broken and cast aside so soon as ever his work by them has been accomplished ; but here it has not been

so. Before attempting to answer this question, let us a little consider what is the worth of this religion, not as compared with that decaying form of Christianity which it encountered, overcame, and supplanted in the East, but as compared with the Christian faith contemplated in its ideal truth and purity. The name which the Mahomedans give to their faith is Islâm, a word implying the yielding of oneself to God. Here, as so often, we have in the name that which lies deepest and nearest to the heart of the thing. The central idea of this religion in its noblest aspect is exactly the surrendering of oneself to God ; but then it is the surrendering of oneself to Him as absolute power, not as holy love. We behold it here at once in its strength and its weakness ; in its strength, inasmuch as it does preach this yielding of self to God, the will of the creature to the will of the Creator ; in its weakness, seeing that this surrender is but the surrender of the weak to the strong. ‘Power belongeth unto God’—this truth the Mussulman or true believer had grasped with all the energies of his heart and soul ; but he had missed the truth which ought ever to go along with it, that this absolute power is wielded by perfect love. The sense of the difference and distinction between God and man, the Creator and the creature, is mightily realized by him ; and he has been God’s fearful avenger upon those who have dared to confound them ; but the fact of man’s likeness to God and union with God he not only fails to make his own, but explicitly denies. Man is for him God’s servant, not his son. A mighty gulf divides them, and shall divide them for ever. The very title, Son of God, is blasphemy in his ears. This name, first realized in the Everlasting Son, and then in as many as have received adoption through Him into the household of saints, this, which is the truest witness and guard against all idolatry, he accounts to

be the worst and guiltiest idolatry of all. In the assertion of the naked sovereignty of God, and the denial, in this involved, of the divine fatherhood, the family, in any true sense of the word, has been for ever rendered impossible.

But Mahomedanism is not merely this falling back from the blessed truths of the Gospel ; it is a still further retrocession in the spiritual history of mankind. It falls short, not only of Christian, but even of Jewish truth. It is a Judaism not provisional ; not looking on to some better thing which it announces and prepares for ; not pregnant with a nobler birth ; but a Judaism stript of its prophecy and its promise, reduced to a religion of nature, without a priesthood, without a sacrifice even as it is without any deep consciousness of sin, without a Messiah. It has no ideal of a perfect holiness after which it summons its votaries to strive ; and indeed how should it have this, when the man who stands at its centre, though not without noble qualities, is yet so carnal, so full of blots and of bloodstains ? You may read the whole Korân through, without lighting on words which in the least resemble these, ‘ Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.’

Or regard it in its social working, as it has shown itself in the twelve centuries during which it has been upon its trial. It has all the faults, all the narrowness of a local religion which by strange unexpected successes has outgrown the region of its birth, a region where it was not without a certain fitness, and has obtained a dominion which recognizes no limitation except the inability to stretch itself further. If in Christendom the attempt has been often made to weave into one inextricable woof the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Cæsar, yet, as we thankfully own, in the end the attempt has always failed.



In Islâm it has completely succeeded, and succeeded, not as a perversion and defeat of the intentions with which Mahomedanism was founded, but as the truest realization of all which it was intended to be. The despotisms of the East are not accidents, but the legitimate results of the Korân; and so long as this exists as the authoritative book, nothing better can come in their stead. Nor may we leave out of sight, that in the very act of slightly alleviating, the Korân has recognized and perpetuated, the two fatal social evils of the East, polygamy and slavery.

But to return to a point which we left;—if all this be so, if Mahomedanism be this backward step in the spiritual education of mankind, if it be no better than this bastard brother now of the Jewish and now of the Christian faith, having in the long run no truth to teach the Church which the Church does not of herself already know much better—how shall we explain its continuance, long after the work for which it was first permitted has been done? We shall best, I believe, understand God's purposes here when we regard this religion in its relations, not to the religions which stand above it, but to those idolatrous worships which stand beneath it. Thus while Christianity has failed to attract the negro races with which it has been brought into immediate contact, many of the fetisch-worshipping tribes of Africa, long sunken in abject and brutal superstitions, have been raised, as it is impossible to deny, by the moral impulses which Islâm has supplied, by a religion which was not too far above them, to the worship of one God, to a certain measure of order and morality, which, so far as we can see, without it they might never have attained. Such a process is even now going forward, as all the reports which reach us from the interior of that land of darkness declare. There are indeed few more curious spiritual facts than the present

spread of Mahomedanism in Africa ; a movement which has failed hitherto at all to attract the attention which it deserves.

For the rest, it must be freely owned that as yet we see very little of its service as a conducting medium, as a religion of transition, as in its own rude fashion a school-master to Christ. Its position is still one of fierce antagonism to the Gospel. Shall it be so to the end ? Is that mysterious re-animation of Mahomedan zeal, which for the last thirty or forty years has been manifest to all thoughtful observers, no more than the quickening to a dread activity of all the anti-christian elements in this religion, that so it may challenge and provoke to a last struggle mightier and better forces than its own, and in that struggle may perish, dashed to pieces by that Rock upon which it might have been built ? Let us hope something better. The end is not yet. It can scarcely have been for nothing that so much of Christian truth was permitted to be wrought up into this fabric of error, that the Son of Mary occupies the place which He does in the Mahomedan theology. Not merely things good, but also things evil, and much more, things, like that wherewith we are dealing now, made up of both, a mingled woof of light and of darkness, they all serve God ; and shall be shown at last to have contributed their share to the working out of his eternal purpose in the world ; even as in Eastern legend other spirits beside the good were compelled by Solomon to take their part and do drudging work in the rearing of the temple of the true God.

## LECTURE V.

*THE CONVERSION OF GERMANY.*

THE Medieval Church of the West found in the seventh century an immense task before it to fulfil. The fulfilment of this task was the performance of a duty, but it was at the same time the conjuring of a danger. How real and terrible that danger might prove the Greek Church at this very time was giving lamentable proof; from which one fair region after another, the cradle lands of the faith, was being torn away by the Saracen misbeliever. Heathen Germany was hardly a less threatening peril to Western Christendom; and, even where it did not positively endanger existence, was a source of constant annoyance, infesting and wasting the border lands. Pauses in the conflict between the two there might be; but enduring peace was impossible between races on such different levels of culture, and so wholly antagonistic to one another in the highest matters of all.

The missionaries who addressed themselves to the enormous task of the conversion of Germany may be conveniently divided into three groups—the British, the Frankish, and, entering somewhat later into honourable rivalry with these, the Anglo-Saxon or the English. A word or two upon each of these groups. The British—they include Irish and Scotch—could no longer find a field for their activity in England, now that there the

Roman rule and discipline, to which they were so little disposed to submit, had everywhere won the day. Their own religious Houses were full to overflowing. At home there was little for them to do, while yet that divine hunger and thirst for the winning of souls, which had so possessed the heart of St. Patrick, lived on, a mighty passion in theirs. To them so minded pagan Germany offered a welcome field of labour, and one where there was ample room for the exertions of all. There were, secondly, the Frankish missionaries, who enjoyed the favour of the Frankish kings, which sometimes served them in good stead; while at other times this protection was very far from a recommendation in the eyes of the heathen, who were easily persuaded to see in these evangelists the emissaries of a foe. There were, lastly, the Anglo-Saxons; who, mindful of the source from which they had received their own Christianity, were earnest in attaching their converts to Rome, even as they were themselves bound to her by the closest ties. The language which these spoke, one which as yet can have diverged very little from the Low German of Frisia, must have given to them many facilities which the Frankish missionaries possessed in a much slighter measure, the British not at all; and this may help to account for a success attending their labours far greater than attended the labours of the others. To them it was mainly due that the battle of the creeds, which had been fought and lost by the Celtic missionaries in England, and was presently renewed in Germany, had finally the same issues there as in England.

It was not until near the opening of the seventh century that the work of Germany's conversion may be said to have fairly begun. One noble apparition, for we can hardly call it by any other name, belongs to the close

of the fifth, that, namely, of Severinus. Of other eminent missionaries we generally know something, who they were and whence they came, and in one way or another what spiritual descent they owned. In him, as without spiritual father or mother, all is shrouded in mystery, till we find him ministering as an angel of consolation, with a self-offering love which knows no bounds, to populations of southern Germany reduced by the frightful anarchy of the times to the lowest depths of misery and despair. I am afraid that the names of others who were among the foremost to break up that hard soil, and to sow in its furrows the seed of everlasting life, well worthy as they are to be held in everlasting remembrance, must remain little more than names for you, so impossible is it for me to make more than briefest pause and that only upon a few. Augustine had not yet landed on the shores of Kent, when already the Scotch and Irish missionaries were pushing forward their assaults upon German heathenism. Fridolin among the Alamanni (cir. 589), Columbanus (d. 615), a very strenuous worker, and mainly in the Vosges, who, like another Baptist, could stand before kings and rebuke them; and Gallus (d. 646), his most illustrious scholar, 'Apostle of Switzerland,' whose name lives in the monastery and canton of St. Gall, lead up the van. Kilian (d. 689) too, another Irish monk, must not be left unnamed; he also by his boldness in rebuking vice winning for himself the martyr's crown. As little should Eligius (b. 588, d. 659) be forgotten, goldsmith and saint, the St. Eloy of Chaucer's Prioress, and well worthy of any just honour, if not of that which she paid him. But he, with Amandus (d. 649), who laboured upon the banks of the Scheldt, into whose waters many times he was flung by the heathen, 'Apostle of Belgium' he has been sometimes called, and English

Willibrord, who also toiled among the wild tribes of our modern Flanders and Brabant, belong to the Roman as contradistinguished from the Celtic group of evangelists.

These are but a handful out of the number of those whose names, with more or less notice of their toils, have reached us. Innumerable others there must have been, now forgotten of men, but whose names are written in the Book of life. When we call to mind the disappointments and defeats, with all of outrage and insult, of wrath and wrong, often even to death, which these must have endured from populations always savage and not seldom fanatic, before their work was accomplished, what grander fulfilment could we anywhere find of that prophecy of Christ, 'I am come to cast fire upon the earth?' Who but He could have kindled and kept alive in so many hearts a flame so divine?

At the same time, there were differences in the intensity and obstinacy of resistance to the message of the truth, that would be offered by different tribes. There was ground, which at an early day had been won for the Gospel, but which in the storms and confusions of the two preceding centuries had been lost again; the whole line, that is, of the Danube and the Rhine, regions fair and prosperous once, but in every sense wildernesses now. In these we may note a readier acceptance of the message than found place in lands which in earlier times that message had never reached; as though obscure reminiscences and traditions, not wholly extinct, of the earlier work had helped to set forward the later.

Behind this line, now reoccupied by the Church, there were populous regions in Frisia, in Hesse, in Thuringia, in Saxony, into which a solitary missionary had hardly penetrated as yet; warrior races, which had never bowed to the superiority of Roman arts and arms, which had

faintly heard of Rome, if they had heard at all ; races animated by the deepest hostility against a Gospel of peace. The opposition of these was altogether different from any that had been encountered in the bringing to the obedience of faith those tribes which had already established themselves within the limits of the Roman Empire. The German populations, which, when detached from their old seats, had so easily yielded themselves to the spiritual allurements of Christianity, which had received baptism and melted into the mass of Christian worshippers one scarcely knows how, offered a far more stubborn resistance when sought out in their own primitive haunts, among their own forests and morasses. It is not hard to see why. Established in lands which had been already won to the religion of Christ, and having left their own holy places, their fanes and sacred forests, even their very priests behind them, they were surrounded, in a manner awed, by a Christian civilization so immensely superior to any which they before had known or imagined, by a worship carried on in stately temples and with magnificent rites. But in their native haunts all this prestige and awe were wanting, with which the true faith was encompassed elsewhere. A band of wandering monks would often be the sole representatives to them of that invisible kingdom, which demanded of them that they should submit themselves to its laws, renounce all or nearly all wherein hitherto they had gloried the most, and accept mysterious and dimly intelligible benefits in return.

But despite of all difficulties in the way, much had been effected in advancing the frontier line of Christianity, many successful aggressions had been made on the stubborn heathenism of Germany during the century which intervened between the missionary labours of Columbanus and the time when Boniface first put his hand to the

plough. Yet for all this, and fully recognizing that up to a certain point Boniface entered on the labours of others, we need have no scruple in admitting the title of 'Apostle of Germany' which has been claimed for him. Winfrid or Boniface—whether Pope Gregory II. gave him this second name, or how he got it, is not clear—was born near Kirton in Devonshire, about 680. Fair and flattering prospects could not detain him at home, with so glorious an enterprise as the winning of Germany to Christ beckoning him to take his share in it. Some distinguishing features of his work are worth your attention. Thus all efforts for the subduing of Germany to the yoke of Christ which preceded his had been more or less unconnected and desultory. With him the organization of the enterprise as a whole began; laying as he did first foundations, where it needed to lay these; building on the foundations by others already laid, where such existed; strengthening what was weak and tottering; supplying what was lacking; reviving things ready to die; recalling to Christian order and discipline populations that had relapsed into heathen practices; bringing the Clergy together in synods, which were hitherto unknown, or which, having once been used, had fallen into desuetude and neglect; everywhere working upon a large and well-ordered plan.

In nothing were the early workers in the vast mission field of the world more worthy of note and imitation, than in their care to make sure, so far as this was possible, of the spiritual territory which they once had won, in the means which they adopted for impressing an abiding character on their work. They did not rely for this on any vague Christian sentiment which by their preaching they might have aroused among their converts; but, as conquerors who not merely overrun but mean also to retain the lands which they have conquered, ever as they ad-



vance are careful to leave fortified posts behind them, so these were diligent, by aid of churches and schools and monasteries which they founded, to hold with a strong and permanent grasp all that once they had made their own. Among many eminent for this, Boniface stands out pre-eminent. What an unerring eye was his for the discerning of the fittest spot for a monastery with its cloistral school attached,—Fulda, so long the centre of the theological culture of Germany, and notably his choice, is a signal witness to this,—or for the dividing out of some land, newly gained to the faith of Christ, into diocesses, and selecting the spot where the Bishop's See should be planted. And what he saw as best, he was able as Apostolic Legate to carry out. Immensely changed or modified as the ecclesiastical arrangements of Germany have subsequently been, there is much in them which to this day attests his practical wisdom, his far-seeing outlook into the future. The Church has had few with a talent of organization such as his, fewer still who have had the opportunity of exercising this talent on so vast a scale.

It is very interesting to note other points in which the practical instincts of Boniface led him to adopt measures for the spreading of the faith most closely resembling those to which the great Missionary Bishops of our own times, such as Selwyn and Patteson, have been led, measures alike in his case and in theirs crowned with signal success. He too sought to win the confidence of heathen chiefs so far that they were willing to intrust their children to be educated by him. In these, trained in the school of Christ, he found afterwards some of his most devoted and efficient helpers; while it did not rarely happen that the hearts of the fathers were in the end turned to the children,

the fathers through their children won to the obedience of faith.

Let all of his somewhat excessive submission to the See of Rome, excessive even for his own time, be freely admitted ; let it be admitted too that he profoundly impressed the same submission, for good or for evil, upon the Churches which he founded ; let it be further owned that with the gold, silver, and precious stones which he brought to the spiritual building there were mingled some hay, straw, and stubble ; yet for all this the foundation whereon he built was Christ ; and where that is so, the true abides, the false perishes and passes away. Then, too, God often makes the faults no less than the graces of his own servants to serve Him ; and it may very well be a question whether at that epoch of the Church's history, and with all that in the next centuries was before it, a national German Church, which did not hold on to Rome, and to such learning and light as could there and not elsewhere be found, was possible. I have touched on this subject already (p. 37), and shall not repeat what I then said. It is only fair too, before quitting this subject, to observe that there was nothing servile in this submission of Boniface. Against more things than one which he saw amiss at Rome he raised a clear and manly protest.

A noble life had a not less noble close. Archbishop of Mentz—he would himself have preferred Cologne as the metropolitan See of Germany—he might have claimed a peaceful close for so stormy and laborious a life. But no ; he cannot forget how in his onward victorious march he had left behind him one fortress of heathendom untaken. His heart yearns after the Frisians whom in the early days of his mission he had sought to win to the faith, but in vain. He lays down his dignities, is the simple evangelist once more, revisits with a small band of faithful

fellow-workers the scene of his baffled labours in other days. Many are now converted, while others are only the more embittered hereby, and at the hands of these he receives the martyr's crown (755).

Until within the last few years there was in the land which owes to Boniface so large a debt, a very hearty and unquestioning recognition of his work,—and this on the part of Roman Catholic and Protestant writers alike. With some among the latter all this is now changed. Attacks of an inconceivable bitterness upon him and upon the whole character of his missionary labour follow fast on one another. Not the conversion of the heathen,—for about that, his accusers say, he concerned himself very little,—but the overthrow of the Celtic Churches of Germany, guilty of the unpardonable sin of declining to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome, was the life-task which he set before himself, and which he carried through with only too fatal a success. Shameful intrigues at the Court of Charles Martel and his sons, for the helping forward of this object, are laid to his charge; and this without a tittle of historic evidence to sustain the accusation, as the accusers themselves are compelled to admit. Even his martyrdom is denied. The authors of his death, we are now told, were a wild robber horde; and Boniface only got what was his due, seeing that, if he had not neglected his proper duties as a missionary Bishop, to curry favour at Courts, these would in all likelihood have been converted, have become peaceable members of society, and so have done him no wrong. Surely it must be in other interests than those of historic truth that all this is so persistently and passionately urged.

At the death of Boniface the area of heathen Germany was very much contracted, as compared with what it had

been when his ministry began. He who once had so boldly struck and levelled to the earth the oak of immemorial age, dedicated to the Thunder-god, had indeed dealt a blow to Teutonic heathenism, from which it never should recover. But there was still one stronghold of paganism upon which little or no impression had been made. The Saxon swarms which had passed over into England had submitted themselves for more than a century to the yoke of Christ. Boniface himself was a glorious witness of the spirit in which some among them had yielded themselves to Him. But not so those that had remained in their native seats, in a Saxony far wider in extent than any which we know now by this name, and including a large part of northern and mediterranean Germany. Of Saxons Tacitus in his muster of the tribes says nothing; Pliny too is silent. Some have concluded from thence ~~that they~~ rose comparatively late to numbers and power and renown. It is more probable that the name only was recent, and that we have here some of the most famous of the tribes of old, the Cherusci and others, but associated under a new collective title; such a process, as we know, being very far from unfrequent; thus Suevi and Boii and Alamanni were all such collective names. The first mention of Saxons which we have in books belongs to the middle of the second century; they do not actually appear on the world's stage till near the end of the third; a wild, fierce and stony-hearted race; indeed, as some Latin philologists erroneously urged, they announced as much in their name. Time was when these Saxons and the various tribes which coalesced under the common name of Franks had dwelt side by side on the banks of the Elbe and the Weser, and as brothers in arms had made common cause together; but since the Franks had risen to such eminency of

glory and power, and, thoroughly crushing the Alamanni, their most formidable rivals, had obtained the undisputed leadership of the Western world, above all since they had accepted the religion of Christ, the strongest antagonism had grown up between nations which had been neighbours and confederates of old.

It was not ambassadors of peace who 'by the gentleness of Christ' should allure these Saxons to yield themselves to his service. Boniface may have hoped that this honour should also be his. It was such a hope which probably guided him in his selection of Fulda, so near to the Saxon frontier, as the seat of a great ecclesiastical foundation, from which as from an advanced stronghold an effectual Saxon Mission might proceed. But it was not so to be. The task of their conversion was reserved for the strong arm of the mightiest of the Frankish Kings, even as the manner of the conversion was quite another. Seventeen years after the death of Boniface the wars of Charles the Great and the Saxons began. Again and again these last after an obstinate resistance submitted. Again and again, when Charles was occupied in some remote region of his vast Empire, beyond the Alps or the Pyrenees, on the banks of the Eyder or the Theiss, warring with Lombards, with Moslem, with Danes, with Avars, they threw off the yoke, renounced the baptism which was to them the badge of servitude, and which, among other consequences, entailed the paying of tithes, to which they had a rooted objection, and cruelly wasted the Frankish border-lands, destroying all the churches and murdering all the priests whom they could reach; only to be as often crushed after a while by his mightier arm.

This whole process of an armed mission, of which England during its conversion had known nothing, this reading

into the Gospel of a leaf from the Korân, and, in another sense than that in which Christ spoke the words, this compelling of men to come in, if judged without reference to the spirit and circumstances of the time, can only be absolutely and unequivocally condemned ; and even with every such allowance may find excuses, but hardly a justification. Alcuin, with full knowledge of all the facts, did not hesitate to express to his royal friend and master . how little pleased he was with what was doing, did not fail to remind him that he might constrain men to baptism but not to faith ; for how, he asked, could a man be made to believe what he did not believe ? And yet it must be admitted that Charles' efforts were crowned with a notable success. After a struggle, which with brief intermissions lasted for more than thirty years (from 772 to 803, or 805, as some will have it), through the larger part, that is, of his reign, he broke the Saxon obstinacy at the last. The chiefs, who had led the resistance, submitted, and now at length in good faith ; and the people as usual followed in their train ; for by a curious reversing of the course of things, conversions which had in the Roman Empire spread upward, from the lower ranks to the higher, from poor to rich, from the slave to the noble, spread downward in the Middle Ages. It was the chiefs in almost every case who were the first converted, and the people who by their example and influence were drawn after them.

No doubt such conversions of nations in a mass must often and for the larger number have been a merely external form, with no internal reality to correspond. Indeed, it was often no better with their chiefs who led the way. Some of the worst perfidies, treacheries, and murders of Clovis belong to a period subsequent to his baptism ; and his sons and grandsons, Christian by

profession, do not appear to have unlearned a single heathen vice, or to have learned a single Christian virtue. Yet with the frankest admission of all this, it must not be left out of sight, that where this wholesale conversion was followed up, as it was in the case of the Saxons, with earnest conscientious efforts to bring the converts, not nominally only but in truth, within the Church's fold, much was hereby done, or was put in the way of being done. Public law was henceforward on the side of true religion. Idolatrous rites and practices were put down with a strong hand. Schools, churches, and monasteries were built; bishopricks were founded; in the present instance those of Osnabrück (803), of Münster (805), of Paderborn (814), of Bremen, with others, followed close on this pacification; there everywhere went forward a ministry of the Word and Sacraments. And even where the first generation, which had adopted the faith by compulsion or in imitation of what others did, and with little or no sincere conviction, was influenced slightly or not at all, the next, growing up under fairer auspices, would show that the training which from infancy it received had not been received in vain. How soon the Gospel struck its roots, and how deep those roots were, in the once stony hearts of this Saxon race, is attested by the poem *Heliand* (= Heiland or Healer)—a life of our Lord, epically narrated, belonging to the reign of Lewis the Pious, Charles' son; and which, springing up on Saxon soil, evidences everywhere the religious feeling, at once deep and popular, out of which it grew, and to which it ministered.

The Eyder and the Elbe once reached, and Germany being, at least outwardly, brought to the acknowledgment of Christ, there was another group of tribes, nearly re-

lated to the Germanic, as their religion, their language, their whole manner of life attested, which was in like manner to be won for Him. Neither was the man wanting here. As Germany had its Boniface, so Scandinavia its Ansgar (b. 801, d. 865), 'Apostle of the North,' as he is called; a gentler, tenderer spirit than Boniface; with a more introverted eye; less of a hierarch; but with less also of his practical talent, though not coming behind him in the faith which no perils could daunt, and no failures could dishearten. One was a lineal spiritual descendant of St. Peter, the other of St. John.

It would be well worth the while to tell, but I cannot undertake to tell it, how the work whose first lines he traced went forward after he was withdrawn; how Jutland and Denmark (1027), Sweden and Norway, which last boasts in St. Olaf (1019-1033) a very violent saint indeed,—these one after another became obedient to the faith; Odin and Thor, and all the gods of the northern Walhalla, struggling fiercely but in vain to maintain their dominion; until by the end of the eleventh century all Scandinavia,—the isle of Rügen, last bulwark of Teutonic heathenism, and not converted till 1168, excepted,—was Christian; a result for it most blessed, but scarcely less so for the whole of civilized Europe. For just as at an earlier day the wild outbursts of the savage Hungarians ceased with their conversion toward the close of the tenth century, so now at length the intolerable ravages of the Danes (thus we name these destroyers, but their pirate hordes were recruited from all parts of Scandinavia), came to an end. These in their light ships infesting every coast, sailing up every navigable river, feared as far as the Adriatic, where they encountered Saracen rovers from the East on the same errand of rapine and desolation as their own, had everywhere found something to



destroy ; while yet their fiercest and most fanatical hate had been reserved for the church and the monastery, the priest and the monk. What England suffered from them, and we know how dismal and disastrous a page in her history this was, almost all Europe was suffering as well. But now at length those perennial streams of wrath and bitterness, which it had been impossible to staunch, were healed at their source ; and the dreaded Vikings, the Regnars and the Hastings, or others like to these, with their desolating hosts, sat down to peaceful occupations in their own lands. All this, with innumerable details of interest, must remain thus slightly touched on and no more.

As little can I follow at length the conversion of the Slavonic races, with whom the Latin Church stood face to face so soon as ever the barrier between it and them, that namely of the unconverted Teutonic tribes, had fallen. These races, which as yet are very far from having played their full part in European story, constitute the third great wave of Aryan migration which spread over Western Europe, the Celtic being the first, and the Teutonic the second. Driven westward by the Huns in the fifth century, and again urged further westward toward the close of the following century by the Avars, they were already in contact with the Byzantine Empire. Nor had this contact been always a hostile one. The Greek Church had already made these tribes the objects of its missionary zeal. This zeal, it is true, at no time equalled that which animated the Churches of the West ; while yet it is most unjust to charge the Eastern Church with having wholly abdicated its duties as a missionary Church, in other words, as one holding the truth not for its own good only, but in trust for all the world. Con-

stantine, better known as Cyril (d. 867), and Methodius, Greek monks, brothers in blood as in toil, stand out the foremost, as ‘Apostles of the Slavonic races.’ A deep obscurity, which later investigations have by no means cleared away, rests on the history of both, above all on their relations to the Roman See. Making no attempt to reconcile conflicting legends, or to choose between them,—for we are in a region here more of legend than of history,—I must content myself with observing that Bulgaria, not a mean province then, but a considerable kingdom, such as from time to time did not shrink from measuring its strength with the neighbouring Empire, about 863 received the faith from Methodius; Moravia from Cyril; the Slavonic tribes owing to the latter, as to a second Ulphilas, an alphabet, and through that alphabet a literature.

The sacred fire spread from Moravia to Bohemia, from Bohemia to Poland. It might for some time have been a question whether these newly converted lands, or most of them, should not fall to the Eastern Church, which had first brought the glad tiding to them, rather than to the Western; yet it did not prove so. Some indeed remained true to the mother from whose breasts they had first drawn the milk of the word; and others, like the Bulgarians, who, however, were not Slavonic by race, but Turanian, were long an apple of discord between East and West, as they inclined now to one and now to the other. The Wends of Pomerania and Mecklenburg, fiercely fighting for their idols, and allowing no peace to their Christian neighbours, were broken at length by the might of the Emperor Henry I. and the Ottos; while the Prussians, the most civilized of all the Slavonic races, were in the end rather exterminated than converted by the Teutonic Knights, an Order of military monks, like the Hospitalers

and Templars ; these, occupying their country, repeopled it with German colonists (1230–1283). Of the conversion of Russia (988), by far the most important exploit, in this line of things, of the Eastern Church, there will be something to say hereafter. For the present it will be sufficient to bring to your notice that, at the close of the thirteenth century, the receding wave of Moorish population in Spain, and a few outlying groups of Finns and Lapps, were all that remained in Europe not included within the pale of the Church.

## LECTURE VI.

*THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.*

AMONG the various Teutonic tribes which forcibly occupied the different provinces of the Roman Empire, and made these their own, I have already mentioned the Lombards. Their relations to the See of Rome, as I then noticed, were almost always unfriendly, their acceptance after a while of the Catholic faith, instead of the Arian which they had brought with them into Italy, doing little to abate an antipathy and remove an estrangement, which might almost seem inborn, so little capable did these appear of mitigation on the one side or on the other. The Lombards having taken Ravenna, and destroyed the Greek Exarchate, and with this the Imperial ascendancy in Northern Italy, were constantly seeking to extend their dominion in the South as well, always threatening, and more than once besieging, Rome. It was in vain that the Roman Bishops turned for assistance to their rightful protectors, the Eastern Emperors, who still claimed their allegiance. These were far off; with embarrassments and perils more than they could successfully deal with at home. Unwelcome helpers at the best, even if there had been any effectual help in them, the Emperors were still more distasteful now, as destroyers of those images which the Westerns had learned to honour, and as branded with the note of heresy for this. The Popes looked round in their

distress for a protector more to their mind, and one less likely to fail them in their need. No nation had shown such devotion to the Papal See as the Franks, the mightiest of the youthful nations of the Western world, and Catholic from their first conversion. It was evidently the policy of Rome to disengage herself for once and all from the falling fortunes of the Eastern Empire, and from the ignominious servitude which the connexion with this entailed, and to make common cause with the abler and more willing helpers at her doors. To these she betook herself now.

The alliance between the two had for a long time past been preparing. Much in the conditions of the Western world was drawing them more closely together; and it so happened that just when the need was most urgent, each was in a position effectually to assist the other; so that the Roman Pontiffs did not come merely as suppliants, asking much, but with nothing to render in return. There was that which they, and they only, could give, which was of priceless value in the sight of those whose assistance they implored. The Mayors of the Palace, the virtual rulers of the Franks, counted that they had reigned long enough in the name of the Do-nothing Monarchs of the effete Merovingian race. It was time that this empty pageant of royalty should cease, that where the reality of power was there should also be the name. But it was not a light matter to set aside an ancient dynasty of kings. A step such as this demanded the highest religious sanction which the Church could give; only so could he who ventured upon it hope to satisfy his own conscience or the conscience of his people. But, as men at that day esteemed, such a consecration of the meditated revolution the Roman Bishop, as head of Christendom, alone could impart. Nor was this sanction

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withheld. Pepin, the son of that Charles Martel of whom we have heard something already, and father of a still greater Charles, of whom we shall presently hear much more, is anointed King of the Franks by Boniface, Archbishop of Mentz, acting herein in the Roman Pontiff's name (752); though some indeed call in question his actual presence and personal share in this anointing. Henceforward Pepin makes the cause of the Church his own. The Lombards meanwhile, altogether failing to take a right measure of their own weakness as matched with the Frankish strength, are rash enough to provoke a conflict which issues in their defeat by him (755); and when somewhat later the provocation is renewed, Pavia, the Lombard capital, is taken, and the Lombard kingdom by the arms of Charles the Great overthrown (774).

This throwing of the whole weight of the Frankish Monarchy into the Roman scale is one of the determining facts of medieval history. Charles, when he wrought this deliverance, already bore the title of Patrician of Rome; this title, whatever it may have meant, having been first bestowed by a grateful Pope upon his father. But Charles' relations with the Papacy were destined to be more intimate still. 'The new Constantine' as he was often called, he made over by donation to the Roman See large portions of the territory conquered by the Lombards from the Greeks, and now wrested by him from the Lombards. He was thus, with his father who had already done something of the same kind, though on a more limited scale, the founder of the temporal dominion of the Bishops of Rome,—the so-called Patrimony of St. Peter dating back to this time; the deed of gift, it is true, does not survive; and the exact limits of the gift it is therefore impossible to define. The territories thus made over to the Pope he was to hold of the King, as of his

feudal superior, if we may thus anticipate a little the use of this language ; for Charles had no intention of setting up an independent state in the heart of his own states—least of all one with such pretensions as were inherent in the Papacy and inseparable from it. Those who in after times wrote in the interests of the Roman Court have represented this act less as a free donation upon his part, than as a restitution to the Roman See of that which had been given long before by Constantine, but had since been violently rent away by the Lombard arms, and was now restored to its rightful possessors. The whole story, however, of the Gift of Constantine, which first emerges in a letter of Pope Adrian I. to Charles (755), but which there were never wanting some even in the Middle Ages, as the Emperor Otto III., to denounce as a fable and forgery, is now acknowledged by Roman Catholic writers themselves to be no better.

More, however, was behind ; the alliance between the Pope and King was destined to be closer still. On Christmas Day in the year 800, the Frankish Monarch was worshipping in the grand basilica of St. Peter at Rome, when, as if by a sudden inspiration from above, Pope Leo III., advancing toward the King; placed a golden crown upon his head ; the whole multitude present thereupon with loud acclamations hailing him as Cæsar and Augustus, in whom the Empire, lost so long to the sight and desires of men, was now revived and restored. This incident was one of profoundest significance. It is not too much to affirm that it is the hinge upon which the whole history of Western Christendom turned for long centuries to come. Emperor and Pope, they are the two centres round which the whole medieval history revolves, the two poles which mutually complete one another. It has been often sought to represent what Leo did as a

higher inspiration of the moment, and one which took Charles altogether by surprise. This suggestion is as old, or nearly as old, as the crowning itself. The King is reported to have said among his friends, that if he had known what was to happen, high festival as it was, he would not on that occasion have been present in the church at all. There may very well have been no distinct concert between the two chief actors on this ever-memorable day; but it is hard to believe that they did not understand one another. Certainly the marvellous swiftness with which the multitude within and without the church at once comprehended, and by their acclamations adopted, this act as their own, if it does not betray a previous understanding, shows that the expectation of such an event was, so to speak, in the air. And who can doubt but that it must have been often in the mind of Charles himself, how mightily it would assist him in carrying out the grand designs of his life, if to all which he wielded of material power he could add the mysterious and yet most real consecration involved in this revival in his person of the Empire of the West? We know that the moral fitness and political expediency of some step of the kind had already been urged upon him by Alcuin and by others. Nay, the project of substituting a Frankish for a Byzantine Sovereign had before this taken shape so far that Gregory II. in a letter to Charles Martel, of date 741, offers to transfer his allegiance from the Emperor to the Frankish chief.

The idea of an universal theocratic kingdom as the divine idea of the government of the world, being one which the prophecies of Daniel did much to suggest and to nourish (Dan. ii. 31-45; vii.), exerted an immense influence on the imaginations of men during the Middle Ages. In Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, and



in his successors this idea had been realized, however imperfectly, for a brief while. Its embodiment in any concrete shape had now ceased for three hundred and twenty years; but it still walked the world as a mighty ghost, eager to clothe itself in flesh and blood once more; an august reminiscence; which men were the less content should abide as a reminiscence only, now that the Byzantine Emperors had forfeited by their crimes every claim to be considered as its rightful incarnation; and when, as the crowning outrage of all, a woman, namely Irene, that woman the murderess of her own son, and usurper of his seat, occupied the Eastern throne. Shadowy and undefined as might be the privileges and powers which this dignity conferred, yet this very vagueness had its advantages; and certainly it was not a small matter to stand out acknowledged by all as in a manner the world's lord, *Dominus Mundi*, linking the present with a glorious past, and so, it might be looked for, with a glorious future. Then too it would be a mistake to regard the Emperor as the only gainer. 'The Frankish alliance, the dissolution of the degrading connexion with the East, the magnificent donation, the acceptance of the Imperial crown from the Pope's hand, the visits to Rome, whether to protect the Pope from his unruly subjects, or for devotion, everything tended to throw a deepening mysterious majesty around the Pope, the more imposing according to the greater distance from which it was contemplated, the more sublime from its indefinite and boundless pretensions' (Milman). 'What,' as has been asked, 'might not that authority bestow or take away which had renewed and given the Roman Empire?'

Before we proceed any further, let us a little consider the man who thus bound up so closely his fortunes and the fortunes of his house with those of the Church, who

was willing to assume the official title of its 'Devoted Protector and humble Helper,' and to undertake the duties and charges which this title involved; at the same time accepting from it in return such moral consecration as it was able to bestow. Charles the Great (b. 742, d. 814), whose greatness is, in his French appellation, indissolubly bound up with his name,—great indeed in peace and in war, in arts and in arms,—was immeasurably the foremost man of his age; nay, we must go back to Julius Cæsar or to Alexander before we find another whose figure so fills and occupies the canvas of history as does his. Gibbon, who has sometimes an eye for greatness even when it displays itself in a Christian, as memorably in the case of Athanasius, has no eye at all for the greatness of Charles: and it is not in his pages that you must seek an adequate appreciation of the mightiest man whom the Middle Ages produced. King of the Franks, by which title we do not mean King of the French, for Germany had very much the larger share in him, Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) and not Paris being the capital of his dominions, he had carried his victorious arms as far as to the Eyder on the north of Europe, to Pomerania on the east, far into Hungary, as far as to the river Theiss, on the south. All which the Lombards owned he had not very long before added to his dominions; while in Spain, despite of one severe but isolated check, which romance has made more of than history would warrant, he had driven back the Arabs beyond the Ebro. Haroun Al Raschid (d. 808), the Mahomedan Caliph, with whom Charles exchanged gifts and courtesies, was the only potentate who could even remotely compare with him in extent of empire, in splendour, or in power.

But Charles deserved the title of Great by a better right than that of the extent of his kingdom, or the

success of his arms. He was indeed the very ideal of a Teutonic chief, for with all his admiration for the higher cultivation of Rome, he never committed the fault which Otto III. committed, nor sought to detach himself from his German root; himself foremost in strength and prowess among his warriors, terrible in war; yet never fighting for the glory, but always for the necessity of the thing. And he was much more than this. He spoke Latin; he understood Greek. He was always himself learning or teaching; at once scholar and schoolmaster; educating himself, or seeking to educate others, his own children above all. The desire which lay closest to his heart was to rescue whatever remained of the Greek and Latin civilization, and of Christian theology and learning—for all seemed in danger of perishing amid the anarchies of the time,—to found schools, attaching them in most cases to cathedrals and monasteries, as the only hope of their permanence; and by aid of these to scatter the darkness and to repel the barbarism which were threatening to make everything their own. He saw, and saw rightly, that in the Christian Church was to be found the one principle of all true culture for the nations under his sway. To the extending the influence of the Church—I do not mean by this the privileges and wealth of the Clergy; to the restoration of its prostrate discipline; to the repression of the frightful vices which were rampant in it; to the raising up of strong barriers, material and moral, against any further pressure of the barbarous heathen on the civilized western world; to the turning, so to speak, the tables, becoming himself the aggressor, and blessing these against their will, bringing home to them benefits of which they knew and were disposed to know nothing; to the making of all who bowed to his sceptre partakers of the highest Christian culture which was then within reach,—to these as its

central purposes his life was devoted. His contemporary biographer tells us that Augustine's *City of God* was the book which he was best pleased should be read to him at meals. The choice of that book was significant. Utterably remote as was that kingdom over which he ruled from the true *City* or *Polity of God*, it was toward this that he was striving. The attempt, however faint, to realize this, a theocratic kingdom, he had accepted as the task for which he lived. Nor is it without its meaning that in the familiar circle of his intimate friends, in which each assumed some name, scriptural or classical, King David was the name by which Charles was willing to be known.

It has indeed been often urged in disparagement of the work which he wrought, that in the larger part it perished with him, that the darkness, scattered for a moment, closed in again and swallowed up all. There is only partial truth in this assertion. The cloister schools which he had founded—Fulda and Paderborn and Hildesheim and many more—lived through the tenth century, generally acknowledged as of the Dark Ages the darkest of all. In these schools were cherished, and from these proceeded, those new activities of the human mind which were to issue in the scholastic philosophy; the University of Paris being in direct lineal descent from the Palatine school at Aachen, of which Alcuin was the founder. And if the reign of Charles does stand out as an island of light with a night of darkness encompassing it on every side before and behind, so far from diminishing, this rather enhances the importance and significance of that brief season of refreshing, that breathing time thus obtained for arts and sciences, which might else have perished, unable to sustain life at all through the dreary centuries which were before them.

But something more about Charles must not be left unsaid. The Chinese have a proverb, 'Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without one.' There were flaws and serious ones in the life of Charles, which it is not for me to keep back. A just and merciful ruler in the main, he avenged on one occasion a Saxon revolt, under circumstances, it is true, of extreme provocation, with penalties of blood, which, as we read, seem to transcend all measure. Then too in the matter of marrying and putting away of wives he claimed a liberty, and in his private life a licence, to which he had no more right than the meanest serf in his dominions. It is not therefore wonderful that, vast as were the Church's obligations to him, it did not see its way to make him partaker of the highest honours which it had to confer; and when an Antipope, Paschal III., ventured on his canonization, the Church itself neither absolutely disavowed, nor distinctly allowed what had thus been done and had found favour with many. So long as the celebration of his day remained local, there was a tacit allowance of it.

We return to the nobler aspects of his life; nor, when all is said, need we shrink from affirming that, if the Roman Empire was to be revived, Charles was well-worthy that it should be revived in him; if there was again to be a Lord of the World, that he should be that lord. And yet, admitting all this, what a multitude of questions suggest themselves to us, when we seek to estimate the precise significance of this event, to define to ourselves with any clearness what the relations were in which Emperor and Pope should henceforward stand to one another. Thus, by what right did the Pope claim to revive in the person of Charles the Western Empire, or, to use the favourite language of a somewhat later day, to translate the Empire from the Greeks to the Germans;

seeing that as yet the Popes did not arrogate to themselves to be the givers or the takers away of kingdoms? But if not as Pope, was it as acting under an immediate divine inspiration? Or was it as representative of the City of Rome,—even as the rabble of that City claimed often in after times that the election lay with the Roman people; which people they styled themselves, trying on one memorable occasion to persuade Frederick Barbarossa of this, but with very notable ill-success? Was it clear to either or both into what relations they were entering, one with the other, relations of mutual dependence, each in some sort owning the other as superior? Thus the Emperor consented to receive the Imperial crown at the hands of the Pope, and only after this coronation to assume the Imperial title; an arrangement so liable to misinterpretation that already within little more than half a century Pope Nicolas I. declared this crowning of the Emperor by the Pope to be a grant to him of the Empire by the Roman See, an assertion in later ages repeated again and again. Once more, could the Pope withhold this coronation on the ground of irregularity in the election? or unworthiness in the person elected? or on any other plea? could he, that is, hinder whom he would from obtaining the Imperial dignity? or, where there was a disputed election, did it lie with him to determine which among the competitors had been legitimately chosen? But then, on the other side, the Emperor was not less Emperor at Rome than elsewhere. The Pope was in a manner his vassal, his man, swore fidelity to him, recognized him as the supreme Judge before whom he might be summoned to make answer to charges brought against him. And just as none might assume the title of Emperor, till anointed and crowned by the Pope, in the same way before a Pope, however canonically

elected, could be consecrated, it was necessary that the election should be confirmed by the Emperor.

It must at once be evident that in this 'Roman Constitution,' as at a later day it was called, there were innumerable unsettled questions, a very seed-plot of occasions of strife, such as would be sure to spring up so soon as ever any lively memory of mutual benefits had a little faded away. Nor is it wonderful to read of German armies continually crossing the Alps to redress some real or fancied wrong committed against the majesty of the Empire, to compel the coronation, unduly withholden, of an Emperor elect, or to annul the consecration of a Pope, which no due confirmation from the Emperor had preceded. It was meant that the two powers, the secular and the spiritual, should mutually sustain one another, each with the weapons that were most properly its own; but suspicions, jealousies, conflicting interests, incompatible ambitions did not fail to set them at variance before long. The two swords, of which we are to hear so much, were continually clashing; and the story of this clashing of theirs constitutes a large portion of the history of the Middle Ages. In treating of this collision, which thus repeats itself again and again, we shall find it impossible to give our sympathy without reserve to the wielders of the one sword or of the other. Both are right, and both are wrong; or rather both contend for a right, and with that right contend also for a wrong. But of all this there will be other and frequent occasions hereafter to speak.

## LECTURE VII.

*THE ICONOCLASTS.*

ART had been so long and so completely in the service of the impure religions of heathendom, was so steeped in their spirit, had so often ministered to what in them was worst, that it is nothing wonderful if the early Church regarded it as something with which the faithful could hold no friendly relations, which they could only reject and condemn. It would be long to detail—and the story belongs to ages anterior to those of which we are treating—by what steps this extreme aversion little by little abated its intensity, gave way to other feelings; until, though not without struggle and remonstrance, Art won for itself a place first in the houses of men, and then in the house of God; this place in the end being such that the danger was no longer lest the Church should in a narrow spirit of intolerance exclude and ignore that which, kept within its proper limits, might render to her excellent service; but lest Art should abuse its victory, forget its proper subordination, and intruding into a region not its own, prove not a helper but a hinderer to any true worship of God in the spirit.

The time in due course arrived when excesses in one direction provoked a reaction and a violent attempt on the part of some to return, not to the simple and naïve intolerance of the primitive Church, for that was impossible, but to a disallowance, forcibly imposed, of all those



outward helps to devotion on which the faithful, for good or for evil, had learned to lean, and which through long use had grown into matters of necessity to many. In the Greek Church, as might have been predicted beforehand, the battle about the images, their abolition or retention, was fought out; the noise and wild tumult of this conflict, this tempest of wrath and wrong, filling for it the eighth century and reaching far on into the ninth. Not indeed that the Western was not continually drawn into the quarrel, which was fraught with immense and abiding consequences, theological, ecclesiastical, and political, for both; destined mightily to help forward the disruption of whatever ties still knit the West to Constantinople, and to further to the same extent the birth and growth of a purely Latin Christianity. If this emancipation of the West from Byzantine influences was itself a gain, yet in many respects it would be difficult to imagine anything more disastrous than this ill-omened struggle proved. Dividing as it did the East from the West, it also embittered them in a thousand ways the one against the other; while the East, in addition to this separation, was within itself still further divided, torn by cruel intestine strife; some of its greatest princes wholly alienated from their people, and the people from their princes; and this at a time when all the forces of the East and West combined, would not have been too many, if any effectual resistance was to be made to the hostile advances of Islâm.

In a recent Lecture on the rise and early spread of this new religion I dwelt a little on the marvellous successes which waited during the first century after the death of its founder on the Moslem arms. The controversy of which we treat to-day is closely connected with these events. The outer bonds which connect one event

and the other may seem very slight, but the inner are very real indeed. I spoke in that Lecture of the hatred of idols which the followers of the Arabian prophet deeply felt, and missed no opportunity of displaying ; of the strength they found in the proclamation of the unity of the Godhead, and in the faith that they were raised up—and in this surely they were not altogether mistaken—as witnesses against the idol-worshippers of the world, against all who in any shape or under any plea gave to the creature the glory due only to the Creator. They were still in the full career of victory at the beginning of the eighth century ; Constantinople, twice besieged by a Saracenic army and fleet (668, 716), hardly escaping a catastrophe that would have abridged by some eight centuries the course which the Eastern Empire was destined in the providence of God still to fulfil.

The principal agent in working out the second and more memorable of these deliverances was Leo III., Leo the Isaurian as he is called (717–741), the second founder of the Eastern Empire, as it is hardly too much to call him ; a hardy mountaineer, who by courage and conduct had raised himself from the humblest rank to be the founder of a new dynasty, and who offered in many ways a singular contrast to the effeminate princes, lapped in luxury from their cradle, ‘the purple-born,’ as they were called ; though resembling them only too faithfully in his inability to distinguish the lines and limits which divide temporal and spiritual power ; or rather in his claims to concentrate both in his own person, as supreme arbiter in the Church. We can scarcely be wrong in assuming that he learned his abhorrence of images from those with whom he had been brought into hostile contact. He is taunted in the polemics of the time with having taken the Arabs for his teachers ; and the charge was in all

likelihood a true one. He had seen the strength which the Islamites found in the one grand truth which among so many falsehoods they held, and he thought to make this strength his own. Probably he could ill brook the title of idolater, which the Mussulmans, and, where they dared, the Jews, cast in the teeth of the Christians. He will be an ecclesiastical reformer; he will put down the worship of images (726); failing this, and angered by his failure, he will abolish them altogether (730).

In meddling thus, Leo does but follow the traditions of the Byzantine Cæsars. Almost every Greek Emperor before him had been a theologian in his way, and generally a persecutor to boot. A rough soldier, bred in camps, he seeks to carry his purpose through by courses the most violent and arbitrary; while the mischief, doubtless a most real one, demanded to be dealt with by methods the most careful and considerate. Entwined as the error was with so much which was not erroneous, it needed to be disengaged from this with a firm, yet also with a gentle and a reverent hand, with such care as men use when they take down ruinous houses which adjoin to temples, lest the sacred should be involved in the same ruin with the profane. There was no such pious heedfulness here. Doubtless the images often and in many ways ministered to superstition. Even those who were most earnest for their retention were compelled to allow as much; that their use had degenerated into an abuse. Not a few of them were believed to have fallen from heaven; men prostrated themselves, burned incense, before them; counted that prayers made at the shrine of one image were more prevailing than those made at the shrine of another; were well pleased to receive the sacred symbols as from their hands; with much more, deplorable enough, in the same kind.

These images, let me explain before going any further, were not raised sculptures or statues, for such the Greek Church has always condemned, but coloured portraitures on a plain surface,—icons it has therefore been found convenient to call them,—or more rarely mosaics. These were precious to many, had endeared themselves to them by immemorial use, being associated for them with whatever they had learned to hold the most sacred. Of all this however the reforming Emperor took no heed. The army was enthusiastically devoted to a leader who had brought back victory to its standards; and with the army upon his side he did not doubt that all opposers and opposition might without much difficulty be beaten down. But he had not taken account of all with whom he would have to reckon. The Patriarchs of Constantinople were for the most part the servile instruments of the Imperial will: but now the aged Germanus resists; and another, more prompt for every shameful compliance, must be chosen in his stead. His resistance indeed, and that of the tumultuary multitude of the city, might after all have profited little. And as little might have profited the trumpet notes of John of Damascus, the most famous theologian of his time; who, dwelling at Jerusalem under Moslem protection and thus beyond the reach of the Imperial anger, incited the faithful by his writings as to a Holy War; if it had not been for another army which Leo had left out of account. In the army of monks he encountered opponents as rude, as resolute, and as fanatic as himself; they were men too whose interests no less than their passions were bound up in the issues of the conflict, for it was chiefly from their workshops that the icons proceeded.

Let us pause here and consider for a little what the monks, who found the violence, and the theologians, who

found the arguments, said for themselves in reply to charges, whose head and front was this, namely that in using and in defending the use of these images, they were breaking, and defending the breach of, the Second Commandment. Yes doubtless, they replied, such a commandment, meant also to be taken in the letter, was given to the Jews, though even for them it admitted tacit qualifications. The Cherubin shadowing the Mercy Seat, much of the furniture in Solomon's temple,—as the twelve oxen upholding the molten sea (1 Kin. vii. 25), and in his house the twelve lions beside the ivory throne (1 Kin. x. 20),—were each and all a going back from the strict letter of this commandment. And then, in respect of that which offended the most, namely pictures of our Blessed Lord Himself, it was quite intelligible, they replied, that at an early stage in the religious education of mankind, men should be absolutely forbidden to make a likeness of Him whom no man had seen nor could see. But since the Incarnation, and by the Incarnation, all this was changed. God had appeared, visible to the eyes of men, had taken the human nature into personal union with Himself. The picture which we make of Him, they said, is a confession upon our part in act, as elsewhere we make confession in word, of the mystery of the Incarnation. You condemn this picture of Christ, they retorted on their accusers, because it is a setting forth of Him in his humiliation; but seeing that it was love which had brought Him to that low estate, it is indeed a setting forth of Him in his highest glory. So especially Theodore, Abbot of the Studion (d. 826); who belongs to the latest period of this long struggle, but is quite the most attractive figure in it, and the most notable theologian whom it produced. The defenders of the icons further urged,—though this was capable of receiving quite another turn,

—that the enemies of these were weakening the whole position of the Church as against her nearest and deadliest foes. What were they in fact affirming but that in this whole controversy the Arabian Antichrist was right, and the Church of God wrong?

It is only fair too to state that the most zealous favourers and promoters of this ill-directed homage always disclaimed with indignation the charge of offering to the images any reverence which did not differ in kind, and not merely in degree, from the worship which they offered to Almighty God, designating it as they did by altogether a different name. We shall very probably feel that in these distinctions which they drew between the one and the other, between the ‘honour’ which they gave to these icons and the ‘worship’ which they withheld from these and gave only to God, there lay no slightest justification of that in which they allowed themselves; but these distinctions acquit them of idolatry, and it is the merest justice to remember this.

Let me add a word or two more before resuming the historic thread of the narrative. No one, I am persuaded, who has studied with any care, or bestowed any serious thought on the subjects which in this controversy were gradually drawn into debate, but will feel, and will ever more strongly feel, that much larger and much deeper questions came up here for determination than might at first sight appear. And yet for all this the whole theological struggle which we are engaged in recording was only too mournfully characteristic of the Eastern Church. Assuredly the masculine common sense of the faithful in the Western world would have chosen, even in the eighth century, some better field than this could ever prove, for fighting the battle of the Incarnation; or, if from causes beyond their control compelled to fight it on this, would

have cleared the field betimes of all which encumbered it, which obscured or concealed what was really at issue, and has rendered it impossible to give more than a most limited sympathy to those who were persuaded that, as against their present foes, they were contending for the central truth of the faith.

I shall not attempt to follow the details of an ill-omened struggle, in which all, if they had a right for which they fought, contrived also to put themselves woefully in the wrong ; I shall pass quickly over the story of savage tumults more savagely repressed, of a throne shaken to its foundations, and a Church miserably torn asunder. Leo was succeeded by a son, Constantine Copronymus (741-775), as distinguished a soldier and able an organizer as himself, of a will as iron as his own. Fanatically resolved to carry through his father's work, he will give it the consecration which hitherto it has lacked. It is not difficult for him to bring together a Council, at which no Patriarch indeed, but 338 Bishops are present. What amount of freedom reigned at this Council, which called itself the Seventh Council of Constantinople (754), may be guessed from the fact, that by it the use of images was condemned as idolatry without one dissentient voice. And now every priest, every monk, every layman was required to give in his separate and personal adhesion to this condemnation. Multitudes yielded ; but not the monks. No violence was spared ; scourgings, mutilations, blindings, imprisonments, exiles, cruel mockings, every device of insult and of wrong, all were without stint employed to force a submission ; and with so inexorable a purpose that, when the four and thirty years of Constantine's reign were ended, it might have seemed as if at last he had carried his purpose through. A monk was no longer anywhere to be seen. The monasteries had been turned

into barracks or stables. The images had wholly disappeared from the churches; only, it is true, to be more carefully cherished in the secret of the chamber and of the heart. On the walls of the churches, where used to be painted incidents from the life of our Lord or from the legends of the saints, there were now depicted landscapes, hunting scenes, vintage revels and the like, the profane temper of the destroyers, irreligious Puritans we might call them, not caring to conceal itself any more in the day of their triumph.

Nothing we may be sure has been lost in the telling of the insolences, the outrages, the cruelties of which the Iconoclasts in this day of their triumph were guilty. In the extreme poverty of contemporary records, we are mainly dependent on the adversaries who crushed them, and on these writing a full century after the events, for our knowledge of the acts and the actors; and such unfriendly reporters may very well have made in their narration that uglier still, which doubtless was ugly enough in itself, even apart from the crowning touches which they gave it.

But to return. It was but a shortlived triumph which the Iconoclasts could boast, and one destined presently to prove no triumph at all. An intriguing woman, the Empress Irene, finds herself guardian of her son, a minor, and craftily uses the opportunity to undo all which so painfully, and at a cost so enormous, had been effected. And now the Second Council of Nicæa (787) annuls all which the Iconoclast Council had decreed. It is true that under Leo the Armenian (813-820), the enemies of the images are again in the ascendant, that there remains one long and violent struggle more. But again a woman, Theodora, herself the widow of an Iconoclast Emperor, working with the spirit of the time, was strong enough to



overthrow an edifice that stood only so long as the Court and army sustained it; but, their support withdrawn, collapsed at once (842). The images in solemn procession are restored to their place in the churches; and the fury of the storm is now felt so entirely to have spent itself that a feast, called the Feast of Orthodoxy, is instituted to commemorate in all after time the final and complete victory over the image-breakers which has been gained.

Throughout this protracted conflict the Church of Rome had thrown her whole influence on the side of those who sought to retain all the abuses connected with the images. Nothing else could be expected. She was herself entangled too deeply in the superstitious use of these to be able to give wise and moderate counsels to her distracted sister Church in the East. But if not from her, it was yet from the West that the wisest words came—that is, from the Frankish Court of Charles the Great; though unhappily they were not the words which finally prevailed. We may regard the four *Caroline Books*,—so named from him, and put forth in 790, three years after the Second Nicene Council,—as his manifesto, and that of the accomplished theologians, Alcuin the chief, whom he had gathered round him. In this book a line is taken remote alike from both extremes. Nor is it possible to contemplate without lively admiration the ability no less than the temper and moderation with which the whole discussion is conducted; and when we are tempted from an intellectual point of view to judge slightly of the Dark Ages, it would only be just to ask ourselves whether in any age the questions here raised could have been discussed with a skill more masterly than in these books is done. And first there is in them a distinct and earnest condemnation of all religious homage

done to the icon, or in and through the icon to any whom it may represent, let this homage be reduced to what minimum it may, explained or explained away as men will—a vigorous refutation of the arguments whereby it was sought to justify such homage. But so much thus plainly set down, the author or authors can the more confidently reprove the fanaticism of the image-breakers, who would recognize no moral difference between these images and the idols of the false gods of heathendom; who would not be content until they had made a clean sweep of all wherewith little by little Christian men had adorned and beautified their churches, or by whose aid they had sought to maintain and quicken a lively impression in their own minds or in others' of the sacred incidents and persons of the past. Man is not all soul, it is here excellently urged; but body and soul; and being thus sensuous in part, may lawfully use sensuous helps. Such is the ground tone and tenor of this very memorable book, the more noteworthy as being in direct opposition to the contemporary utterances from Rome. Nor was this protest the only one. There was at the famous Council of Frankfurt (794) an express condemnation of all which the so-called Second Nicene Council had on this matter taught. The Popes who owed too much to the Frankish kings, and were too much in their power, only timidly resisted; being satisfied to leave to time and to the growing superstition of the age to make good their position; nor, as the issue too plainly showed, did they miscalculate here. It was not long before the excesses of the West rivalled those of the East.

I have not, you will have observed, invited you to deplore very deeply the ill success attending a movement which was yet directed, as no doubt this iconoclastic was, to the abating of a most perilous abuse in the Church.

That the Church should have laid the axe at the root of this, and with this, of other mischiefs, should have recognized the steps by which it had been unconsciously drawn away from the simplicity of Christ, and thereupon retraced these steps, such a course would have been a ground of most earnest thanksgiving. But what profit could accrue to the Church through a reformation imposed by the arbitrary will of a monarch, and carried out with such violence and outrage and wrong as was this? A Pope virtually claiming to be Emperor as well, a priest-king, is bad enough, and this the history of Western Christendom has abundantly shown; but worse than this is an Emperor who demands also to be Pope, a king-priest, which was the persistent claim of the Imperial autocrats of Byzantium.

And over and above this fatal flaw which vitiated the whole endeavour, namely that it was a violent intruding of the secular power into a region not its own, there cleaved to it other faults which gave sufficient evidence how barren of all good it would certainly have proved, if success had attended its efforts. Reformations in religion can only be carried out to profit by those whose hearts God has touched, by such as are themselves religious. There must at all events be among the reformers a sufficient number of these to leaven with some sort of higher leaven the lump of the worldly, the self-seeking, the profane, who will inevitably put themselves forward as sharers in the work, in the hope that in one shape or another it will yield some booty for them. But assuredly no one will affirm that the fierce princes and their fierce satellites, the prime actors here, were animated by any earnest love to Christ; so far from this, the hatred of many for the images had passed into a hatred of those whom the images represented. No one will deny that,

with rarest exceptions, all the religious earnestness, all which constitutes the quickening power of a Church, was ranged upon the other side. Had the Iconoclasts triumphed, their work when it showed itself at last in its true colours, would have proved to be the triumph, not of faith in an invisible God, but of frivolous unbelief in an incarnate Saviour.

I can close this Lecture with no better or wiser words than those with which Dean Milman reads to us the lesson of this mournful story: 'There was this irremediable weakness in the cause of Iconoclasm: it was a mere negative doctrine, a proscription of those sentiments which had full possession of the popular mind, without any strong countervailing excitement. The senses were robbed of their habitual and cherished objects of devotion, but there was no awakening of an inner life of intense and passionate piety. The cold naked walls from whence the Scriptural histories had been effaced, the despoiled shrines, the mutilated images, could not compel the mind to a more pure and immaterial conception of God and the Saviour. Hatred of images, in the process of the strife, might become, as it did, a fanaticism, it could never become a religion. Iconoclasm might proscribe idolatry; but it had no power of kindling a purer faith.'

## LECTURE VIII.

*MONASTICISM.*

A REHABILITATION—for this I believe is the word—of men and things, of some that might reasonably have despaired that such would ever include them, has gone forward of late years to a very remarkable extent. If you ask me what that unusual word means, I cannot answer better than by saying that it has been long, if not in English, yet in law-French, a word to signify the restoring and replacing in a position of esteem and honour, or, it may be, of authority, one who, rightly or wrongly, had forfeited such position ; it is a making him ‘habile’ or able for this once more ;—or, not adhering so closely to the image which the word suggests, it might be described as a moral whitewashing of such as in men’s sight were as blackamoors before. This rehabilitation has in recent times included men such as Sulla, Catiline, Tiberius, Nero, Richard III., Alexander Borgia, Marat, and Robespierre ; it has not excluded institutions such as the Spartan Krypteia and the Spanish Inquisition. But it has also included persons and institutions with better right to its benefits than any of these. It is nothing wonderful that medieval Monasticism has profited by the reopening of enquiries, which some at the beginning of this century had on very imperfect information too hastily assumed to be closed. Whether its rehabilitation will be complete, is another question. It may do much to

explain and justify its existence, to show the debt which the Church and the world owe to it, and yet fall short of this. This much we certainly need not hesitate with a recent writer to admit—namely that in the midst of a fearfully demoralized state of society monasteries were comparatively places of peaceful industry, of devoted zeal and of Christian living; while at the same time we may count it a sentimental reaction from a narrow and contemptible prejudice to depict them, as Montalembert in his *Monks of the West* has done, as a kind of little heaven upon earth.

With these preliminary remarks let us enter on a subject which offers to us ethical problems of no little difficulty. The whole medieval Church, with its grand features of devotion, of heroic self-sacrifice, with all its strivings after the highest, and then this same with its terrible aspects of evil, of evil which often seems to us as though it were inextricably bound up with its very existence, and a part of this, is a constant perplexity to him who takes history in earnest, who is not satisfied with merely knowing that such and such things have been, but would fain know also why they have been, and to what ends they served. Above all is it a mystery and a perplexity to him who regards the Church as a divine institution for good, and only for good, in the world. Some, attracted and awed by the nobler aspects which the Church of those ages presents, have resolutely shut their eyes to all which was otherwise in it, have fallen down and worshipped, counting all succeeding ages a declension from the 'ages of faith,' which, with all they had most worthy of admiration and honour, have for ever passed away. Others, repelled and shocked by the frightful mischiefs, spiritual and secular, of those times,

have had no eye except for these, and have refused to believe any good about those ages at all.

Now if the good were so separable from the evil, that, disentangling these the one from the other, we could approve the good, and condemn the evil, the perplexity would not be so serious; though it must be freely owned that this process of taking and leaving, praising and blaming, is attended by subtle but very real dangers of its own in its reactive influence on them who thus become judges and in part condemners of men, it may be immeasurably greater and better than themselves. But in this woof which we are contemplating now the dark threads and the light are not capable of being thus disengaged from one another. This sense of an immense perplexity, of contradictions which it is impossible to reconcile, perhaps no where presses upon us so heavily as when we contemplate certain institutions which we cannot count as accidents of the medieval Church, for they are of its very essence, nor regard as the fringe of a garment, when we know them in a great measure to have been the very garment itself. Imagine the Papacy, imagine the Monastic Orders, both or indeed either of them withdrawn, and, as a period of Church history with characteristic features of its own, the Middle Ages would simply cease to exist. Of the Papacy I shall speak by and bye. We have now to deal with Monasticism. We cannot abdicate our right to judge it. A great moral phenomenon which we do not go to seek, but which meets and confronts us unsought, we cannot without great mental cowardice shrink from having some judgment about it, whatever the dangers may be which wait upon such judging.

To me it seems plain that so soon as ever the better spiritual forces, which even at the beginning were not the

exclusive ones, began to fail, the high tides to ebb, there sprung out of the Monastic system mischiefs the most enormous. To this we must stand, as by the penitentiaries,—I use the word in its early sense and not in its modern,—and by other records of those times, attested only too well; while yet again and again we put to ourselves this question, How could those ages of the Church have done without it? what substitute for it could they have found? The missionaries who went in the early Middle Ages on the forlorn hopes of the Church, who wrought the conversion of England, of Germany, of Scandinavia, of Slavonia, where had they been trained? Was it not in the cloisters of Iona, or of St. Gall, centre of evangelization for all South-Western Germany,—or of the Benedictine Abbey of New Corbey, from which single House the whole Scandinavian mission was sustained and fed,—or of some other religious foundation of like kind?

And the same difficulty besets us, though not perhaps quite so urgently, when we contemplate other functions which the monasteries and the monks fulfilled during those long ages, sometimes so dreary, almost always so tempestuous, that connect the ancient and modern world. Again and again we put to ourselves these questions, Who during those dismal times would have kept alive the sacred fire of learning, if these had not been there? How would that remnant of the precious treasures of ancient literature which has escaped the shipwreck in which so much had perished have reached us, if they had not made it their business to transcribe and multiply books? What would have survived of higher culture without the cloister schools? of art, if these had not cherished the sparks which might else have been quite trodden out?

Nor is this all. The world might have struggled on, poor savage world though it would have been, without literature and without art. But they were the monks



who taught, not so much by precept as by example, that lesson of such surpassing worth, namely that in the labour of the hands there is dignity and not degradation. Incalculable was the gain when the Benedictines gave a religious consecration to the cultivation of the earth by the linking of this with prayer and the reading of Scripture, thus effectually and for ever redeeming this labour from the dishonour which slavery had impressed in the old world on an occupation which was there regarded as the proper business of slaves, and relegated to them. And never was there more urgent need of such a moral glorification of labour than in those wild and savage times, when the earth, trampled and desolated by the march of successive barbarian hosts, its former tillers scared away or slain, required to be again, as from the beginning, subdued by patient toil to the service of man. We sometimes hear the petty observation—it used to be heard much oftener—that the monks knew how to select the best and most fertile spots for themselves; when indeed it would be truer to say that they knew how to make that which had fallen to them—it was often the wilderness or the morass that none else cared to cultivate—the best; but this by the sweat of their brow and the intelligent labour of their hands.

And if in the end more of the soil became their property or that of other ecclesiastical foundations than was healthy either for the Church or the State, this had its advantages no less than its serious drawbacks. There can be no doubt that the sequestration of lands for religious uses was at many times in the Middle Ages, indeed we may say almost always and almost everywhere after a while quite overdone, that in 'the dead hand' of the Church there came by degrees to be grasped far too large a proportion of the national wealth; for there was little wealth

except the land. And yet if only kept within reasonable limits it assuredly was a gain that a certain portion of national property should have religious obligations distinctly impressed upon it—obligations to maintain the service of God's house, to relieve the needs of his poor. However imperfectly these obligations might be felt and fulfilled—and most imperfectly no doubt they often were—it was better thus than if all had been swept into the hands of the lay lords of the earth, who, as a general rule, had less to remind them of what the duties which went along with property were, the consecration to sacred uses which in part at least it ought to receive; who seemed to themselves to be doing the most natural thing in the world when they spent all upon their pleasures or their pride.

But freely admitting the greatness of the debt which was owing to the monks, can we yet refuse to admit concerning the monastic ideal of the highest Christian life,—the separating off, that is, of innumerable companies of men on one side, and of corresponding companies of women on the other, to live their lives apart,—that it is a human invention, running counter to a divine? Of the monks of the West must we not admit that they shared with their Eastern prototypes the inevitable disease of seeming to protest against family life as gross and secular? Did they not proclaim, and by act more plainly than by word, that the sexes would be then most holy when kept the most asunder? That state of life by Christ regarded as an exception, which he who found in himself a special vocation thereto might, perhaps ought to embrace, they set forth as the ideal to which all should be invited and urged. Now, without gainsaying the accidental and occasional benefits which sprang from such a separation of the sexes, yet such a witness, so borne, must have reacted most injuriously on the whole life of the family in

Christendom, lowered its tone, and gone far to empty it of the beauty and consecration which according to the divine idea of the constitution of human society it should bear.

What can we say to these things? What indeed but briefly this, namely, that He who is at once the King of ages and King of saints, does in each age for his Church the best which the moral materials He has at command will admit. Men are free agents, with the choice therefore of working for God or working against Him. He who has willed to be served by none but the free can only use the materials which He finds, whether these are absolutely the best or not. And thus He will give partial and provisional allowance to much which is very far from being according to his perfect and highest will, will show Himself the one supreme and absolute Workmaster, in that with materials and instruments so imperfect He brings about his purposes, making all things and, in one way or other, all men to serve Him; not suffering the evil which may have mingled with his good to defeat it; but rather causing the good to operate so effectually as often to rob what is not good of its worst power to harm.

This much said by way of introduction, let me sketch very shortly some aspects of Monasticism in the West, so far as it falls within the times of which we treat.

The first origins of the Monastic system, how it took its rise in Egypt where it was in a manner indigenous; how it spread over the neighbouring lands of Syria and Palestine; how it was brought by Athanasius to the West, found earnest resistance there at the first, but in the end an acceptance which should render it a mightier factor in the Church life of the Occident than ever in

the Orient it had been,—showing itself more flexible, more able to adapt itself to new conditions, to rise to novel heights ; how it suffered by the anarchy and shared the disorders of the fifth and sixth centuries, all this I can just allude to and no more. Neither can I more than mention the fact that the monasteries were reduced to some sort of order and discipline by Benedict of Nursia (b. 480, d. 543), who, intending to furnish a Rule for his own convent of Monte Cassino (529), devised one of such wisdom and practical good sense that, little by little, it was adopted over the entire West. With all this, belonging as it does to a time anterior to that with which we have to deal, I have a right to assume a certain acquaintance upon your parts.

In the disastrous times which followed the death of Charles the Great and the failure of his scheme to reorganize the Western world under a single head, the discipline of the religious Houses fell with everything else ; fell, not perhaps quite so soon, yet by the end of the ninth century had fallen almost as low as it was possible to fall. But within these Houses symptoms of a spiritual reaction showed themselves earlier than elsewhere. The revival dates from 910, the year of the foundation of the monastery of Clugny in Burgundy, which was destined to exercise so enormous an influence on the future of the Church. While matters at Rome were at their worst, there were silently training within the walls of this Abbey the men who should inaugurate a new order of things (see p. 119). Already, so one said at the time, the whole house of the Church was filled with the sweet savour of the ointment there poured out. It followed that wherever in a religious House there were any longings for reformation, any aspirations after a higher life, that house affiliated itself to Clugny. In this way the

constitution of what was called a Congregation began, that is a cluster of religious Houses, scattered it might be over all Christendom, but owning one rule, acknowledging the superiority of one mother House, and receiving their Abbots or Priors from thence. In the Clugnyan Congregation, for example, there were about two thousand Houses in the middle of the twelfth century—these mostly in France; the Abbot, or Arch-Abbot as he was called, of Clugny being a kind of Pope of Monasticism, and for a long time, the Pope excepted, quite the most influential Church-ruler in Christendom. Peter the Venerable (d. 1156), best known through some points of contact with St. Bernard and with Abélard, but well worthy to be known for his own sake, occupied this post of eminent honour in the Church. Monte Cassino had been hitherto considered as the pattern on which other Houses should fashion themselves; but its glory was now eclipsed by the greater glory of Clugny; however it might retain, in the midst of all the novelties of younger competitors, a certain stately dignity and authority of its own.

These religious guilds or corporations fell in with the temper of the time; and thus the eleventh century saw the foundation of several new Orders, as that of Camaldoli (1018), of Vallombrosa (1038); and, more important than either of these, the Carthusian (1084); so called from Chartreuse near Grenoble, where it made its earliest abiding place. The Rule of this Order exceeded in severity that of all which had gone before, while it hardly left room for any which should come after to exceed it. The eudemonism of the present age does not require to be flattered and fed; nor does our generation need, so far as one can see, to be warned against practising excessive severities on itself; yet it is difficult not to feel

that the austerities by this Rule imposed were to a large extent pursued and practised, not as means to an end, but as an end in themselves, and as having an intrinsic worth of their own. Neither should we here leave the Carmelites unnamed ; who, tracing up their first origins to Elijah and Elisha, but indeed founded by a Crusader (1156), had their chief seat on Mount Carmel, being hermits living each alone rather than monks living in a community, until the conquests of the Saracens left them no choice but to retire to Europe (1238).<sup>\*</sup> Other smaller Orders there were, which claimed special works of mercy as their own ; of them, however, hereafter.

But one was founded at the close of the eleventh century (1098), which should exercise a far stronger influence on the Church's life than any that hitherto we have named, the Clugnian perhaps only excepted. The Cistercian, of which I speak, was, as all these new Orders were, an attempt at reformation, this reformation consisting in a recurrence to and stricter observance of the Rule of St. Benedict, with, it might be, here and there a drawing tighter of the Rule itself. But the Cistercian, besides this, was an attempt, not wholly unsuccessful, to make Monasticism more of a quickening element of spiritual life, not merely for those within the walls of the cloister, but also for the multitudes beyond. In this, which was a partial anticipation of what was afterwards more fully carried out by the Mendicants, was the main secret of their success. It was an effort to avert from themselves the accusation, so often brought against the monks, that they abandoned the Church and world to their fate, being only anxious by a cowardly withdrawal of themselves to secure their own salvation. At first indeed the new Order gave no promise of the magnificent future which was before it, nursing-mother as it was destined to

prove of so many Popes, of Cardinals and Prelates out of number. Indeed at one time, as the first little band of enthusiasts who founded the Order died out one by one, and no others took their places, it seemed likely that it would expire without having enlisted a single novice, scaring these away as it did by the extreme severity of its Rule. It was in this precarious condition when St. Bernard, the scion of a noble Burgundian house, came to the rescue, drawing after him some thirty young companions of his own rank of life, whom he had inflamed with his own passion for a life so rigorous and austere. The Cistercians are sometimes called Bernardines from him ; and this name does no more than express the fact that he was their real, although not their nominal, founder. From Clairvaux, by him made famous for ever, for some five and twenty years he ruled not merely the Order which derived its chief lustre from him, but, it is hardly too much to say, the whole Western Church. Counsellor and admonisher of kings, trainer and maker of Popes, healer of schisms, condemner of heresies, author of a new Crusade, he was in every aspect, save indeed in that of the highest speculative theology, the leading spirit of his age, even as he was the loveliest flower which medieval Monasticism could show.

When this later embodiment of the monastic idea began to compete for the world's favour, and to show how formidable a rival it was likely to prove, the older Clugnian foundation had already seen two centuries of existence ; and the lapse of years, the world's admiration, and an immense prosperity which this admiration drew after it, had begun to tell upon it. We do not read of any scandalous disorders there, though doubtless some relaxation of the severer discipline of an earlier time had crept in. Of the lavish offerings of the faithful some part

had been laid out on their own Houses, which were oftentimes of regal grandeur and extent, and on churches, of which many were magnificent embodiments of the highest art of their time. To the grandeur of these the whole aspect of the Cistercian buildings was the strongest contrast, and, whether so intended or not, a silent rebuke. There were no splendours there, but everywhere an austere simplicity, a puritan plainness; for costly tapestries naked walls; for heaven-aspiring roofs low rafters; for immense windows with their gorgeous wealth of stained glass, narrow openings just sufficient to let in the day; for silver candelabra iron candlesticks, and of these only enough to give light: no splendid ritual, no elaborate music. Then too, while others, the Clugniens above all, gloried in their independence of any other authority save that of the Pope, and most of all in their exemption from Episcopal jurisdiction, a dutiful submission to this was an essential feature of the younger Order. It is not wonderful that the glory of Clugny paled before a glory which exceeded, before the stricter discipline and severer living of Clairvaux.

But the rigour of the Cistercians themselves was in due time to thaw beneath the sun of the world's favour. Already in the thirteenth century their fall had begun. The Inner Mission had been taken out of their hands by the Mendicants, and they succumbed to that doom of declension and decay, to which, as it would appear, all sooner or later were bound in; for indeed those Orders, wonderful at their beginnings, and girt up as to take heaven by storm, seemed destined to travel in a mournful circle from which there was no escape. Goethe, recording the attempts to spoil him which followed his first literary successes, has somewhere said, 'When a man has done a noticeable thing, the world takes excellent care that he shall never do another.' The words which possess so much



of cruel truth have their application to societies no less than to individuals. In these Societies there was at the outset zeal and labour and love and self-denial; and these excellent graces in so large a measure as to draw on the Order that could boast of them the world's wonder, men admiring and by gift or by testament heaping lands, riches, favours of all sorts upon it. And then after a while prosperity did its work. The salt lost its savour, and the first love departed, and a revival in some novel shape of things ready to die became necessary; which revival sometimes arrived, but not always;—this also in due time to spend and exhaust itself, as all before it had done. Fuller, at once witty and wise, as is his wont, has put it well: 'As mercers when their old stuffs begin to tire in sale, refresh them with new names to make them more vendible, so when the Benedictines waxed stale in the world, the same Order was set forth in a new edition, corrected and amended, under the names first of Cluniacs—these were Benedictines sifted through a finer searse, with some additionals invented and imposed upon them . . . . Secondly, Cistercians, so called from one Robert living in Cistercium; he the second time refined the drossy Benedictines.'

With whatever jealousy the different Monastic Orders might regard one another, or might one and all be regarded by the parochial or secular clergy, they were safe never to want the good will and protection of the Papal See. The Church could not exist without its Bishops and Presbyters, who were by divine appointment constituent elements of it; and yet it was not upon these that the Papacy mainly relied, or to whom it looked for its chief support. This support it found rather in the Monastic Orders, which were its own creation, its natural allies, from whose ranks the Pope himself had usually

been drawn, and for which were reserved the choicest favours and exceptional privileges. This preference after all was not very wonderful, and did not want its measure of justification. There was probably more real work to be gotten out of the monks than out of the secular clergy, as certainly they were held in higher estimation and honour by the world in general; they were the 'religious;' while to the seculars no such title of honour was applied. If a signal emergency arose, the monks were the readiest and the fittest to meet it; being found ever in the front where the battle of the Church or of the hierarchy was to be fought. A new Order, petted and favoured, was often a safety-valve to carry off a perilous enthusiasm. That which, left to run its own course, and embodying itself in the form of a sect, might have gone far to wreck the Church, did in the form of an Order strengthen rather and sustain it. The Monastic Orders with their freer activity have been sometimes likened to the Schools of the Prophets; the secular Clergy, in their routine of fixed services, to the Levitical priesthood. The comparison is not altogether a fanciful one.

I shall fitly close this Lecture with a few words from two of the most accomplished defenders of the Monastic system in modern times, but who looked upon it from somewhat different points of view. Montalembert, the latest of these, in his *Monks of the West*, repels and refuses with no little warmth and with some indignation the praise which Chateaubriand bestowed on the monasteries, namely that they furnished a refuge and retreat for the weary and sick of heart, for those whom the arrows of the Almighty had pierced, for the disappointed, the misunderstood, for multitudes who, so far as this world was concerned, could not boast of being 'men who had succeeded,' but might be regarded rather as having

fought the battle of life and lost it, or perhaps as having failed to fight it at all. He declines to see in these cloisters such hospitals for the sick and the weary as Chateaubriand describes them. They were rather in his judgment training places for the strong ; where not what was feeblest, but what was most robust and most vigorous in the Church's life was to be found, where the men were moulded and fashioned who should afterwards rule the Church or convert the world. There is truth in both statements, but doubtless in the best days of Monachism, and in the best examples of it, the judgment of Montalembert is nearer to the truth than the more sentimental view of the other. Of the qualifications with which either conclusion must be accepted, of the abatements which must be made from both, I have already said something, and cannot for this present undertake to say more.

## LECTURE IX

## HILDEBRAND.

So long as Charles the Great lived, it was not likely that there should be any serious collision between the spiritual power and the temporal. Few would have been disposed to provoke a conflict with one so powerful and predominant, so clearly resolved to allow no encroachment on the domain which he claimed as his own. He too upon his part recognized the limits which divide the two domains. In remarkable contrast to the Byzantine Emperors, and notwithstanding his own lively interest in the theological questions of his time, he abstained in the main from any undue interference with them; or, where as *Rector Ecclesiæ*, for this title he assumed, he did interfere, he usually so carried the Church with him, that none were disposed to question or resent the share which he took in her affairs.

But the Empire which Charles had won, it needed another Charles to keep together. His institutions had done something here, but his personal influence much more, and to this he left none to succeed. Of his sons one only survived him, the youngest and the weakest, Lewis the Pious; fitter for the cloister than the throne. Through family quarrels and intestine jars, aided by the mutual jealousies of Roman and Teuton, the mighty fabric of empire which Charles had reared fell into fragments not very long after his death, and all attempts to

piece these fragments together in new combinations ended in failure. The story is a deplorable one, but still we may deplore it overmuch. The throes and birth-pangs in which the new nationalities of Europe were born were terrible ; but if at the cost of these Europe was spared a second Empire of the Byzantine type, they were not endured in vain. Nor was it long before the rudiments of future kingdoms, shaping themselves, though with very dim and uncertain outlines at the first, out of the general wreck and ruin, began to appear. For a century indeed or more the Imperial dignity was not absolutely tied to anyone of these kingdoms, but shifted from one to another, while oftentimes there was no Emperor at all, his supremacy and very name being alike in abeyance. In the end, however, the German kingdom, or kingdom of the East Franks, so transcended every other in power, that in the days of Otto the Great (936-973) it permanently annexed the Imperial dignity to itself. The consequences of this, alike for Italy and for Germany, for Italy above all, were incalculable. Throughout all the Middle Ages they stand in relations to one another the closest, and at the same time the most unhappy ; able to make one another miserable, but very rarely able to do one another any good.

The Popes meanwhile have used the partial, or what was often the total, eclipse of the Imperial power for the increase of their own. Very curious is it to note the steps of stealthy but ever watchful encroachment by which they sought to limit the one, and to enlarge the other. Small things here are often significant. Thus up to the time of Leo IV. (847-855) in all Papal documents the mention of the Emperor's name had preceded the Pope's ; but now it follows. In the same pontificate the Pope drops the use of *Dominus* in addressing the Emperor. Nicolas I. is

not anointed only, but crowned, which no Pope before him had been. It was at this coronation that an Emperor (Lewis II.) first held the stirrup of the Pope. Nor does there want a brief gleam of more substantial glory to light up his pontificate who bears the title, and not without right, of the Great (858-867), for certainly Nicolas comes behind none who preceded or followed him in strength of character, in political insight, and in a high moral purpose as the animating principle of his life. But close upon this there follows a time of very deep degradation. All which in the eyes of men is counted the holiest becomes the spoil of wild and wicked factions among the Italian nobility. For fifty years and more (904-962) the election to the throne of St. Peter lies in the hands of three infamous women, a mother and her two daughters. Their domination has been often characterized by a word, which, though it veils its ugliness in Greek, I do not care even under this veil to repeat. The moral outrages which this time beheld are not to be told ; certainly I shall not attempt to tell them. Roman Catholic writers make no attempt to conceal the depths of desecration and dishonour which the Papacy then passed through ; nay, they seem rather to take a pleasure in making the worst of these, arguing that none but a divine institution could have sounded such abysses of infamy, and yet emerged with a long future of glory and greatness before it. If indeed they were content to argue from this recovery how profound a root the Papacy must have had in the necessities of those times, the sense which men must have entertained that it fulfilled a part that no other could, there might be something in this argument. More in this survival I fail to see.

Evil things in the end had grown so intolerably evil that even such as were most jealous of Imperial interfer-

ence saw in this interference the only remedy for these ills, and besought the assistance first of the Emperor Otto I.,—from whom, as ‘Defender of Western Christendom,’ they had a right to claim this (963),—and when in the succeeding century the old mischiefs gathered strength anew, of Henry III. (1046). The help thus sought was honourably rendered. A series of respectable Popes, all nominated by the Emperor, and all German, brought back a measure of credit and reputation to the Papal Chair. This help, it is true, was not very gratefully acknowledged, seeing that the most immediate use the Papacy made of the new strength which revived character brought with it was to get rid for ever of the necessity of obtaining the Imperial approbation of the Papal elections.

But while these princes did something to reinvest an institution so miserably discredited with some sort of good name, it was more from within than from without that strength came to it again. The man who most effectually wrought for the lifting of it up to heights from which it might seem to have for ever fallen, for the giving to it a new lease of life, and a world-domination vaster than could have been dreamt of in the wildest dream (let us judge of him morally as we may), was unquestionably one of the few men who have made and moulded the history of their own and of after ages. Hildebrand—we know him officially as Gregory VII., but it is difficult not to call him by his proper name—was a Benedictine monk, trained in the famous monastery of Clugny. This monastic House, the mother house which gave to the Order its name, had already grown to a spiritual force in Christendom; and one so great, that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that without a Clugny there could scarcely have been a Hildebrand; or, if such there had

been, that, wanting zealous and trained instruments to work out his will, he would have found himself helpless for the carrying out of his vast designs. The name has a German sound, but it is not recognized as such by German scholars ; and there is no reason to doubt that he was Italian by descent as well as by birth. Long before his own elevation (1073), from the Pontificate of Leo IX. (1048), he had been more and more felt and acknowledged as the ruling spirit of the reforming party in the Church, had virtually named Pope after Pope, not fewer than five ; and under the shelter of their names had already begun the conflict, which, now that the time seemed ripe, he was prepared to wage more boldly than ever in his own.

It was not so much new ideas launched by him upon the world, as the energy with which he embodied old ones in act, that gave him his grand position in history. All which he uttered had been uttered by others before him ; but that which others promulgated and undertook with a certain hesitation, presently stopping short as men affrighted at their own boldness and shrinking in amazement before the spirits which themselves had raised, he carried through to its ultimate conclusions. For him the source and spring of all the ills which afflicted, degraded, and threatened, unless arrested, to destroy the Church, lay in its bondage to the secular power. With its complete emancipation from this bondage the sole hope for the future was bound up. The Church must be free ; but for him it was only free when it had extinguished every other freedom but its own. Hildebrand could not so much as conceive a distribution of power that should leave severally to the Church and the State a domain of their own, each sacred, each divinely traced out. For him the one was holy, having to do with the highest



interests of men; the other profane;—Nimrod, the mighty hunter of men, being in his eyes the true author and founder of that organized violence, the State. Here was a distinct advance on the teaching of his illustrious predecessor and namesake, Gregory I., who had been content to affirm that the priesthood was of divine ordaining, but the kingdom of human importunity (with reference, no doubt, to 1 Sam. viii. 6, 7); the one having been freely founded by God, the other reluctantly extorted from Him. To one so minded, any other arrangement than that the Church should rule and the State should serve, must have presented itself as monstrous; as a denial of the fundamental ideas on which a Kingdom of God must repose.

The first signal reform by which he hoped to deliver for ever that spiritual kingdom at whose head he stood, from shameful subservience to the men of the earth, the princes of this world, was the revival and reinforcement of the laws requiring the celibacy of the secular Clergy,—laws which never since the date of their introduction in the fourth century had been universally obeyed, and in his time had fallen, at least among the lower ranks of the Clergy, into general neglect. Our own Dunstan indeed, himself in a narrower sphere and among a ruder people a prophetic type and harbinger of Hildebrand, had attempted about a century earlier what Hildebrand now undertook, but with only partial and temporary success. The hierarchical system which Gregory had at heart was essentially anti-national. It could only subsist by the absolute subordination of the interests of any and every particular nation to the interests of the Papal See. A celibate Clergy might consent to this, might labour for this, but certainly not a Clergy of which the larger proportion were married. These ceased at once

to be a militia in the heart of every land, upon whom as upon sure allies the Pope could under all circumstances rely. Their country, its honour, its dignity, its well-being were so much to them, that in any struggle it was at least as likely that they should be found ranged on the side of their native prince as on that of a foreign ecclesiastic.

Other motives, and of these some worthy of honour, wrought in the mind of Gregory. Doubtless he saw the danger, in those days a most real one, of the Clerisy resolving itself into an hereditary caste; all the higher places in the Church preoccupied and handed down from father to son, or made the subjects of some other family arrangement. And with this he beheld a glory and chief strength for ever departing from it, namely the offer which it made of a free career to all, its placing what it had of highest and best within the reach of the lowest and the humblest, if only they showed themselves worthy of it. The Church, it is true, has never been a pure aristocracy of merit, with all its highest places filled by the ablest and best of its sons; but there have been in it nearer approaches to this, than any other, merely human institution could show. Himself humbly born, the son of a carpenter at Soana, his own experience had taught him what grand opportunities were thus afforded to such as knew how to use them, and he would fain preserve these for others.

The issues which the battle against the family had, need not surprise us. The married Clergy, without organization, with many misgivings about the rightfulness of their own position, with the rule of the Church plainly against them, however the law of God might be upon their side, were a very unequal match for one who had no misgivings about the rightfulness of *his* position. Yet

even so it cost him a mighty struggle to carry out his purpose. The opposers were not overcome till he had enlisted against them all the blind passion and coarse manichæism of the lowest among the people, hounding on as he did the rabble to insults and outrages of every kind against those who were now styled the 'Nicolaitans;' for in contests like this there is nothing so effectual as the fastening of an offensive nickname upon adversaries; and so this heresy of the Nicolaitans was invented (with allusion, no doubt, to Rev. ii. 15), and the married Clergy with their favourers and abettors counted guilty of it. Of the frightful evils which sprang from the success that at length attended the efforts of the Pope, it does not need to speak more in particular. Let it suffice to say that his iron will and inexorable resolution triumphed in the end over all opposition. Milan, strong in her Ambrosian traditions, attempted resistance, but with no other result than the loss of ecclesiastical liberties which up to this time, in the face of Rome herself, she had preserved; and from the Pontificate of Gregory VII. dates, not the demand of the Roman Church that all who minister at her altars should be unmarried, but any approach to an universal observance of this rule. Henceforth the Clergy became an exclusive body, not patterns to the flock, not models after whom other of the faithful should order and fashion the lives of themselves and their families, but a separate class, lifted above their brethren, and in this central fact of their lives isolated from them.

No sooner was it evident that Gregory would come forth from this struggle victorious than he followed up one blow with another. In his determination to put down the profane trafficking with holy things, and to suppress this not merely in its coarser, but also in its

subtler forms, to preserve the Church's *peculium* from being absorbed into the possessions of rapacious nobles and kings,—and the peril of this was immense,—he can only have our sympathy, and, when we contemplate all the selfish and brutal forces which he challenged to the conflict, in a large measure our admiration. But, as we shall see, this was very far indeed from all which he proposed to himself. And thus there comes now to the front that which is known as the struggle of the Investitures,' a struggle which was not to reach its settlement until nearly half a century after Gregory's death, and even then a settlement which, as it turned out, was very far from proving the end of strife.

There are some conflicts which at certain epochs in the world's history are due; they may arrive a little sooner or a little later, the exact moment of their breaking out being determined by accident, or by the action of some single will; but in themselves they are inevitable. This of the Investitures, which, once begun, shook Western Christendom so long, in which pen and sword were alike so busy, was one of these. It will not be very difficult to explain to you its nature. In the eleventh century the whole feudal system as it existed in the later Middle Ages was rapidly shaping itself, and was so effectually moulding European society to its own conditions and requirements that the Church itself could not escape its influence, but must submit to its control. This system may be briefly described as a complete organization of society through the medium of land tenure, in which, from the king down to the lowest landowner, all are bound together by obligations of service and defence,—the lord to protect his vassal, the vassal to do service to his lord. Growing as this system did out of the circumstances of the time, with all its faults it met the needs

of the time ; probably did more to satisfy these than any other would have done ; in all likelihood was the only one possible. But manifestly it could not continue, if one half of the land,—and in many countries the Church was in possession of at least a moiety,—had escaped the obligation of those services that were everywhere else the condition of land tenure ; or had been so held that the rendering of such services could not be enforced. The secular princes therefore demanded that a Bishop should not enter upon the enjoyment of the temporalities of his See, should not indeed be consecrated, until he had done homage for these temporalities, and received from their hands the Investiture of them ; the Bishop engaging himself hereby to the fulfilment by himself, or, where this was not possible, by proxy, of the duties corresponding.

There was a complaint of long standing on the Church's part against the form in which this Investiture was made, namely, by the delivery of a crosier and ring. As many as had the faintest instincts of churchmanship about them were justly offended at this employment of the sacred tokens, symbolizing as these did, not the temporal rights and emoluments which were all that the lay patron could confer, but spiritual gifts and relations ; the ring the Bishop's marriage with his Church, the crosier his commission coming direct from Christ Himself to feed the flock committed to his charge. This manner of Investiture was a practical denial of the spiritual character of the Church ; an ignoring of it as a kingdom not from this world, but from above : though scarcely intended so by Charles the Great, who probably was the first to use it ; and they were altogether in their rights,—Hildebrand the first and foremost of these,—who required that this Investiture should clothe itself in some other form. He felt, and felt truly, that spiritual power must

be a divine power, not derived from any mere man whatsoever ; that no king nor kaiser could be the source from whence it flowed ; that either the priest is nothing, or is called of God to his work.

But he and the Churchmen who fought this battle by his side did not stop here. They were resolved to get rid not of this offensive form of homage or Investiture only, but of the homage itself in any and every shape. All the abuses connected with the obtaining of Investiture from the lay-patron, simoniacal payments and the rest, frequent and flagrant as they were, he was resolved by a single stroke to make for ever impossible ; and, more daring purpose still, by the same stroke to release the Clergy for ever from any and all dependence on the secular power. The property of the Church, now the desecrated spoil and merchandise of the princes of this world, he would reduce within his own dominion. Hildebrand was not the man to assert a claim like this without seeking to put it through ; and in a Council at Rome (1075) he deposed every Bishop or other spiritual person who had received Investiture from lay hands, putting them under an excommunication, till they should have renounced the accursed thing which by this impious compliance they had gotten. The same excommunication he laid on Emperor, Prince, Potentate, whosoever he might be, that presumed to demand this homage, or to confer on any by Investiture the temporalities which belonged to his See, Abbey, or other benefice.

With claims like these, which, if admitted, would in fact have released from every obligation to the State the holders of one half or more of its soil, it could not be long before the two powers thus placed in opposition proceeded to measure their strength against one another. What settlement was reached at length I shall do best now to

relate, though in fact it was not till nearly fifty years after Gregory's death that this settlement arrived. The first Crusade, which followed hard upon that death (1097), drew men's thoughts away from the home-struggle for a while. But only for a while. Before long it occupied them anew; and various ineffectual efforts were made by means of some compromise to close the quarrel—Pope Paschal II.,—he is known in English history as the supporter of St. Anselm,—in the year 1111 going so far as to consent that the Clergy should renounce all possessions held by them on the tenure of homage. This compromise, or surrender rather, would certainly have brought the quarrel to an end, seeing that nothing would have then remained wherewith to invest; but the German Prelates, not very unreasonably, refused to accept an arrangement that would have stripped their sees of their entire endowments; and they compelled the Pope to go back from this undertaking. After inkshed in abundance and bloodshed not a little, a settlement was arrived at, which has since acquired the name of the Concordat of Worms (1122). The term concordat, I may observe, applied to such amicable arrangements between the spiritual and the temporal power, does not date earlier than the fifteenth century; but was then applied to earlier compromises of the kind. In this concordat each of the contending parties gave up something, but one much more than the other; the Church shadows, the State substance. The more important elections should be henceforth made in the presence of the Emperor, or of his deputy, he engaging not to interfere with them, but to leave to the Chapter or other electing body the free exercise of their choice. This was in fact to give over in most instances the election to the Pope, who gradually managed to exclude the Emperor from all share in Episcopal appointments. The temporalities of

the See or Abbey were still to be made over to the Bishop or Abbot elect, not, however, any longer by the delivering to him of the crosier and ring, but by a touch of the sceptre, he having done homage for them, and taken the oath of obedience. All this was in Germany to find place *before* consecration, being the same compromise that seven years earlier had brought the conflict between Anselm and our Henry I. to an end; in Italy and in the kingdom of Arles within six months *after* the same. Crosier and ring should still be delivered, but not by any secular hand; even as it was not any longer by these emblems that the temporalities were conferred.

But we have put ourselves in advance of the times of Hildebrand, to which we return. It was not long before the Papal pretensions brought him and the young German King, Henry IV., into mortal collision. It must be freely owned that if, in this first hostile clash of arms between the kingdom and the priesthood, the Church was magnificently represented, such was far from being the case with the State. Henry, left an orphan at six years old, in childhood and youth submitted of a purpose to the most corrupting influences, having already alienated by tyrannous courses and driven into open rebellion those on whose loyalty his throne should mainly have rested, displayed in the earlier stages of the quarrel none of those higher and nobler qualities which adversity revealed, if it did not create, in him; and assuredly was ill to cope with the great and politic Pontiff, who had so dextrously selected not Philip of France, still less William of Normandy, but in their stead this dissolute boy for his antagonist; while yet, if he could humble him, the highest in worldly dignity of the Princes of the earth, he might be regarded as in some sort having humbled all.

Little by little the relations between the two became



more and more strained: the Pope complaining of the King that he nominated Bishops hostile to the Roman See, that he retained among his confidential advisers excommunicated persons, that his rule was an intolerable tyranny, and his private life a shameful outrage on all decency; and in the end citing him to make answer for himself in person to these charges. The fact that such a citation should have been possible gives us a glimpse of the wonderful reversal which two or three centuries had brought about in the relations of Pope and Emperor. Henry understands what it means; that the Pope is claiming the right to depose him; that in all likelihood he will exercise this right. He snatches at whatever weapons of defence are at hand. Hastily calling together a Diet, he hurls countercharges against the Pope, as sorcerer, simonist, fautor of heretics,—this last charge referring no doubt to the favour which he showed to Berengar,—with whatever other accusations a blind rage can suggest; and will anticipate his own deposition by a proclamation of the Pope's (1076). And now the Church's thunders do not sleep. Henry is pronounced under ban; to have forfeited his crown. This ban of the Church had not yet lost its terrors; the frequency of these thunderbolts had not bred their contempt. Never indeed till now had they been launched against an Emperor; but they prove good against him as against the meanest. Henry's adherents fall from him as from 'a man forbid.' He himself loses heart and courage, makes abject submission (the well-known scene at Canossa); but, once restored to the Church's communion, repents his repentance, takes up arms again, and displaying energy and conduct for which none had given him credit, wins back the larger part of Germany by arms. An anti-Cæsar, raised up by Gregory—and such in these ages are almost as plentiful as anti-

popes,—perishes in battle (1080); Henry carries the war over the Alps, and, various causes helping, compels the Pope to abandon Rome, and to seek the protection of the Normans. Norman adventurers, as I shall have occasion again to observe, had recently founded a kingdom in South Italy, which on this occasion and on others proved an opportune and welcome refuge to Popes in the day of their adversity. Here, at Salerno, Hildebrand dies (May 25, 1085), in exile and defeat; to all appearance the vanquished champion of a lost cause; but indeed, as the issue proves, not the conquered but the conqueror in that mighty duel which was now fairly begun, that tragedy in several acts, played now on Italian, now on German soil, and now on both, whereof this was the opening act.

But I have followed up to its close this struggle with Henry, which was indeed the main affair of Gregory's life, to the neglect of some other aspects of it that must not be altogether past by. His restless activity, his high-flying claims, brought him into collision with other of the kings of the earth. It was under a banner consecrated by a papal benediction that William of Normandy went forth to win the crown of England; nor did Gregory fail to demand homage from him for the goodly kingdom which this benediction had enabled him to win. But when William refused, saying bluntly that he had promised nothing of the kind, that his predecessors had never yielded this homage to the Pope's predecessors, and that neither would he to him, Gregory let the matter drop. The same caution he displayed in the matters of Philip I. of France. Indeed, none was more wary than he was to know how far he might venture and with whom; and to let fall, for the time at least, claims which were likely to be seriously contested; none had laid closer to heart the maxim of the Roman poet, *in audaces non est audacia tuta*. It is a charac-

teristic of the man which the least favourably impresses us. One would willingly see in him a little less of cunning, and a little more of uncalculating fanaticism.

Lines and colours of the darkest have been freely employed in drawing the portrait of this Pope, not Hildebrand, but 'Brand of Hell,' as our Homily with a grim play upon the name has called him; 'Höllenbrand,' as not seldom the German Reformers. This is not very wonderful. With no misgiving but that his cause was the cause of God, he trampled without pity or remorse on human hearts and their strongest affections. Overthrowing one tyranny, but, unable to conceive of a free Church except under the conditions of a servile State, he reared high another, and a more intolerable in its room. Eminent statesman as he was, he yet was one in whom the serpentine craft left little or no place for the columbine simplicity. Cardinal Peter Damiani (b. 1007, d. 1072), the man of his right hand, who knew him in his heights and in his depths, in one of his letters fondly calls him his *Sanctus Satanas*, his 'St. Satan,' or, shall we render it? his 'Holy Devil'; and if this was said more than half in jest, yet, as the proverb tells us, many a true word has been uttered in jest.

But we owe justice to all: and who can refrain from admiring the mighty energy of will which enabled this man, in defiance of such oppositions, to bring the Church upon new lines, lines upon which for centuries after it ran? His conversation was 'without covetousness,' in all ages a rare grace among Churchmen to what ever branch of the Church they may belong. Then, too, if stern to others, he was first stern to himself. Far off from him and from his Court, as it is almost needless to say, were those shameful disorders which had so disgraced the Court of some who went before him, and should disgrace

the Court of others who came after. He took his place and his work in earnest. To be highest in dignity meant for him to be foremost in toil and first in danger. And when upon his death-bed he exclaimed, 'I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore I die in exile,' let there have been what of self-righteousness there may in such an appropriation of words that only One had a right to make without reserve his own, they were the utterance of his deepest conviction ; and if this absolute identifying of his cause with the cause of God was his sin, it was also that which left pardonable the sin. Not to us must the great Pontiff,—in my mind the greatest of all, for Innocent III. in the main did but reap what Hildebrand had sown, and fill in an outline which he had traced,—not to us, but to his own Master must he stand or fall. Whether he was one of the good it is not for us to determine ; certainly he was one of the great of the earth.

## LECTURE X.

*THE CRUSADES.*

To understand the Crusades aright, and the motives and impulses which led to them, we must travel back a little, and acquaint ourselves with the history of the Holy Land in the centuries immediately preceding. Jerusalem had fallen at the first burst of the Mahomedan invasion into the hands of the immediate successors of the Prophet (638); but had yielded upon terms which, so long as they were observed, ensured a tolerable existence to the Christians who were content to remain under Moslem rule. Nor was the treatment of pilgrims from the West on the whole intolerable. So far from this, the Saracen regarded with a certain sympathy these devout visitants to spots which they also counted holy. It had, indeed, once been a question with Mahomet whether he should not select Jerusalem as the sacred City, the religious metropolis of Islâm. This, with other similar baits, he had at one time held out to the Jews, and only let them fall when he discovered that the Jews were not by them to be won. But this fairer estate of things did not last. Great revolutions in the East brought the Holy City and the Holy Land under the dominion of a barbarous Turkish tribe (from 1073), recent converts to the Mahomedan faith, but converts of the old fanatical stamp—and changed the position of Christian residents and

Christian pilgrims very much for the worse. These pilgrims, who were much more numerous in the tenth and eleventh centuries than before they had been, the passion for this religious travel having by this time much increased, brought back the most lamentable accounts of the treatment of their brethren in Palestine; of the outrage and insult wherewith all places by Christians counted the holiest were treated; and, it would often be, of scorn and misusage which they themselves or their fellow pilgrims had endured. Men had listened to these stories long, and with an ever-growing irritation; but as Western Christendom became more conscious of the new strength that was stirring in it, slowly there rose up in men's hearts a desire to win back the land which the Redeemer in the days of his flesh had trod, the grave wherein He had lain,—for, while all was holy there, his Sepulchre was the holiest of all; and at the same time of avenging all this injury and securing for themselves and for their brethren in all time free and unhindered access to the sacred places.

Long before a Crusade came actually to the birth, such thoughts had been stirring in the hearts of many. From Sylvester II. (999–1002) there came a voice, 'a cry'—for so he called it—'from Jerusalem laid waste,' summoning all the faithful to its rescue. But the time was not yet, nor should be for almost a hundred years. The great thought came much more nearly to embodiment in act in the time of Gregory VII., to whose heart such an enterprise lay very near (1074); but what between quarrels with the Emperor, quarrels with the city of Rome, struggles with an antipope, he had made only too much of work for himself at home; and it was not till Urban II. was Pope, not, that is, till very near the close of the eleventh century, that armed

Europe was actually afoot and girded for this glorious toil.

Where there was so much inflammable stuff as in Latin Christendom had been accumulating for years, a little spark was sufficient to kindle all into a blaze. Peter the Hermit did not show himself a very capable leader of a crusading host, nor, when it came to hard blows, in any way a hero ; but the furnishing of this spark is usually attributed to him. Himself an eyewitness of the wrongs which the Christians in the East endured from the brutal and fanatic Turks, having been entrusted with letters by the Patriarch of Jerusalem beseeching assistance from the faithful in the West, he passed, with the Papal sanction, from land to land, telling everywhere what things he had seen, perhaps had suffered ; and, gifted as he was with a rude but popular eloquence, stirred the Western world to its depths. Such is in the main the generally accepted version of the part which in the rousing of Christendom he played. And certainly Peter and his ass have so established themselves as recognized stage-properties at this point of the wondrous story, that one accepts unwillingly the results of later enquiries, which, stripping him of his legendary fame, leave him an obscure fanatic with no influence whatever in the first wakening up of the West ; although, when this once was accomplished, there were not wanting in him gifts which enabled him to allure a huge unhappy multitude to their ruin.

The leaders of the age made no attempt to repress the enthusiasm, but rather did all which in them lay to fan this fire to an ever stronger flame ; most of all the Pope, who could not fail to perceive the immense increase of influence which from such an enterprise must redound to him, the moral consecration of his power which must grow to him from the placing of himself at its head, even

as this headship would of necessity devolve on him. He saw, for indeed there was much more of settled policy in the Crusades than we sometimes assume, that, as men in that day were minded, a devoted soldier of Christ meant also a devoted soldier of the Church, and this a devoted soldier of the Pope, not now any longer merely the spiritual, but also the military chief of Christendom. Urban himself made early proof of the gains at home that were to be gotten from these enterprises abroad ; owing as he did his triumph over an antipope, Clement III., to the armies which at once he found at his beck. One of these chased his rival from Rome.

What motives wrought with others,—superstition, love of romantic adventure, sense of wounded Christian honour,—I shall seek presently to set before you. Let it suffice for the present to say that when, at a solemn Council held at Clermont in Auvergne (1095), the Pope, in an impassioned discourse still preserved to us, set himself at the head of a Crusade, and promised absolution from all their sins to as many as in a state of true penitence died while engaged in this holy warfare, there burst from the enormous assembly an universal cry, ‘ God wills it ! ’ ‘ God wills it ! ’ No time was given for colder calculation. All who offered themselves for the work attached at his bidding a cross to their right shoulder. This, sewn upon their garments, was as a visible token that they were Christ’s soldiers, pledged to this holy war, and prepared after the chivalrous fashion of the age to fulfil his command, ‘ If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow Me.’

And now the intense eagerness to take part in this armed pilgrimage, to have a share in the delivering of the Holy Land from the yoke of the infidel, knew no bounds. Germany, it is true, was slow to kindle, but kindled at



last. England had not yet recovered the shock of the Norman Conquest, nor indeed in any case would William Rufus (1087–1100) have found a Crusade very much in his line. Spain had already on a smaller scale a Crusade of her own, which had lasted for centuries, and was to last for centuries more (711–1492). It was thus inevitable that France should take the lead. Indeed, this lead would any how have been hers, incomparably rich as at this time she was in saints, in warriors, in poets, in scholars,—foremost not in one movement only, but in all that were now beginning to quicken as to a nobler life the heart of Christendom. It would have been impossible to repress, and none tried to repress, the excitement. Fathers, mothers saw with joy the departure of their only sons on this perilous but glorious adventure; wives the departure of husbands whom they loved the best. Monks and other recluses, some with the leave of their superiors, many without it, forsook their cloistral retreats; Bishops and other ecclesiastics put themselves at the head of their flocks; women, concealing their sex, were found in the ranks of men. Few wished to stay behind, and fewer dared. If here and there some knight, who in the general opinion might have gone, tarried at home, the Troubadours made insulting songs about him; or perhaps the ladies of the neighbourhood sent him the unwelcome present of a distaff, as the only implement he showed himself worthy to wield. So many pledged and pawned their worldly possessions to raise funds for their equipment, that the price of land fell immensely in the market; while that of a horse, or of armour, or of ought that would serve a warrior's need, underwent a corresponding rise. Whole regions appeared to be depopulated, so vast a proportion of their inhabitants had set forth for that city now the cynosure of so many eyes. Europe, recovering from the anarchies of the early Middle

Ages, was not the less conscious of innumerable social discomforts ; of pent-up energies which were seeking somewhere a vent. The yoke of feudalism with its cumbersome obligations and complicated ties sat uneasily on the nobles ; the burden of vassalage on the serfs. Men rushed into the Crusades as a relief from all this, as affording an outlet for forces which, compressed and repressed, were intolerable to them.

All aspects of that time were marvellous, but the moral aspects the most marvellous of all. There will be dark colours enough in any truthful picture of the Crusades ; let us regard them first on their brighter side. Not a few who before had been bitterest foes now embraced and were reconciled, and as brothers in arms set forward for Palestine together. Many who had hitherto been plunged the deepest in worldly lusts,—men violent, impure, profane, sacrilegious, with hands steeped in blood,—seemed suddenly to be awakened to a nobler life, to leave their former selves behind them, and, setting forward to the earthly Jerusalem, to have become pilgrims also to that Heavenly Jerusalem, whose towers and pinnacles shone as it were behind and through those of the earthly City. This was eminently the case, St. Bernard tells us, with the Knight Templars, a valiant Order of soldier-monks, founded a little later (in the year 1118) for the defence of the Holy Sepulchre ; and in the main recruited from men such as these ; so that, as Bernard with perhaps a faint touch of irony observes, the world was as much benefited in losing as the Church was in gaining them. He is sometimes spoken of as their founder, which is a mistake ; this much, however, is true ; that without his enthusiastic allowance of them and the consecration—for the word is hardly too strong—which this his approval gave them, they would never have grown to what they

did. Their Rule too, which was that of St. Benedict, but this adapted to so novel a phenomenon as an Order of military monks, they owed to him.

A mighty tempest of elevating, purifying emotions swept over western Christendom. It is not easy for those who have never known, to understand what it is for an age receptive of noble impressions to have a purpose and aim set before it, which enlist all its energies, meet all its peculiar conditions ; while at the same time, lifting it above the commonplace and the mean, they are far loftier than any that men's minds have hitherto entertained. Such a purpose and aim, such a high-pitched endeavour, were the Crusades during well-nigh two centuries ; and the answer which Christian Europe returned to the appeal thus made to it is an unmistakeable testimony of the preparedness of the Middle Ages for noble thoughts and noble deeds.

I have said already that, in presenting the Crusades to you from this point of view, I would not lead you to suppose that all was thus elevated and grand about them. Every page in their history, not to say the final issue which they found, and which must be taken as the Divine judgment about them, would bear witness against me. The false was mingled in large proportion with the true, the dross with the fine gold. All did not set forth to Palestine, no, nor yet nearly all, single-minded warriors of the Cross. Some, on the contrary, drawn along with the crowd, and unwilling to stay behind when so many went ; some out of a mere love of adventure, and weary of inaction at home ; some hoping to find that wealth and position in the East which were denied them in their own land,—to carve out a domain, or it might be a kingdom, for themselves with the sword ; others, again, that they might escape their debts and leave their

creditors behind them,—for so long as they were engaged in this holy war none might disquiet them in person or property, nor did the interest of debts accumulate; others, again, that they might relieve themselves from heavy penances which they had incurred, the Church accepting the Crusader's vow as a discharge in full of whatever ecclesiastical censures a man might have come under. 'Thieves and murderers,' exclaims Fuller, 'took upon them the cross to escape the gallows. A lamentable case, that the devil's black guard should be God's soldiers.' All these and many other such motives helped to swell the armies of the cross-bearers. The atrocities of which too many among them were guilty,—the spoliation and massacre of Jews on the way to Palestine being accounted by these nearly or quite as laudable a work as the slaying of infidels in Palestine; the dissolution of morals; the extent to which multitudes succumbed to the temptations of the East; all this made it only too plain that the fire which in many bosoms had been kindled, was not fire from heaven; that in any true sense Christ's soldiers and servants they were not, since, whatever victories over the infidel they might win, they had not won the victory over their own appetites and lusts.

I must pass over with only the briefest notice the mighty acts which on both sides were wrought—and mightier the world has never seen—the battles, the sieges, the prosperous and adverse fortunes, the frightful sufferings inflicted, the frightful sufferings endured; for these do not properly find place in a Church history at all. It will be enough to remind you that this precipitation of Europe upon Asia, beginning in 1097, lasted on for the larger part of two centuries, during which time Jerusalem was twice won and twice lost again; that, not

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to speak of the stream of pilgrims, armed and unarmed, that was continually setting eastward, there were during this period seven great expeditions,—expeditions in which, besides kings and princes of a second rank, three Emperors took a personal share,—styled the seven Crusades; though it is not difficult to count them, as some have done, at fewer or at more. I will run rapidly through them, and as a little help to your memory, will attach to each one or more of the most illustrious persons or most remarkable features connected with it.

Of the first you have heard something already. It was the Knights' Crusade, no Emperor or King gracing it with his presence; but Tasso sung it. It issued in the taking of Jerusalem (1099), and the founding of a Latin kingdom, on the pattern of the feudal kingdoms of Western Europe, under Godfrey of Bouillon; although he, noblest and worthiest of this first band of Christian warriors, refused to be styled King, or to wear a golden crown, in that city where his Lord had worn one of thorns. But that Latin kingdom, though constantly recruited by new accessions from the West, though sustained by the knightly valour of the two military Orders, the Knights of St. John and the Knight Templars, in whose members the characters of soldier and of monk were so strangely blended, utterly refused to take root; and in less than fifty years another Crusade became necessary (1147) for the propping up of an artificial edifice, which, undermined by vices, jealousies, quarrels from within, and hard-pressed by the gathering forces of Islâm from without, was already tottering to its fall. Edessa, one of the minor principalities which the crusaders had founded, and the main outlying bulwark of the kingdom, had already fallen (1144). Of the second Crusade St. Bernard stands out as the principal figure and the animating spirit. It

was he who, leaving his beloved retreat at Clairvaux, and passing through Germany and Switzerland and the Low Countries, everywhere roused by impassioned speech or earnest letter the chivalry of the West, that they should hasten to the aid of their sorely distressed brethren ; persuaded Conrad III., first of the Imperial line of the Hohenstaufen, not to fall short of so grand an occasion ; invoked a divine benediction on their arms who went, and promised them a success which never came ; for, as the event too plainly proved, seer he might be and was ; but, as the proverb which had now its birth, *Bernardus non vidit omnia*, acknowledged, even to him there had been vouchsafed no vision here. This Crusade, thanks in part to Greek intrigues and treacheries, in part to miserable dissensions among the Crusaders themselves, proved a disastrous failure. Its leaders, the German Emperor, and a French king, Lewis VII., return home, having effected nothing, and bringing back with them hardly a wreck of the magnificent armies which they had led to dishonour and defeat (1147-1149).

If the dreaded catastrophe which this Crusade should have averted did not arrive at once, it was only delayed for a season by dissensions of the Mahomedans among themselves. When indeed the tidings came at last that the Holy Sepulchre was again in the hands of the infidel (1187), a cry of anguish went up from all Western Christendom. Quarrels at home were made up for a while, and the armed knighthood of Europe girt itself for one mighty effort more, which, as it was fondly hoped, should be the last that was needed. And now two Crusades, the third and the fourth,—for it is best to count them as two,—were on foot at the same time ; one mainly German, the other English and French. Great names, and names more or less familiar to us all, are

connected with both. Frederick Barbarossa indeed, the grand Hohenstaufen, is less familiar to some of us than he should be, and we do but faintly estimate the loss which his death, drowned as he was in crossing a little river in Asia Minor (July, 1190), entailed on the crusading hosts; but Philip Augustus of France (1180–1223) with Richard Cœur-de-Lion of England (1189–1199) on one side, and the royal-hearted Saladin on the other, are more than the mere ghosts and shadows which so often are all wherewith the past is peopled for us, if indeed it be peopled at all; though for a nearer acquaintance with these many among us have to thank Sir Walter Scott and *The Talisman* rather than any proper studies of our own. Not the winning back of Jerusalem, but only some precarious privileges accorded to the pilgrims proved the sum total of advantages which by these mighty efforts were obtained.

What should have been the fifth Crusade (1204) and what by some is reckoned as such,—though I shall not count it a Crusade at all,—did not so much as attempt the recovery of the Holy City. It issued in the capture of Constantinople by the Latin armies, under the plea of restoring a rightful Emperor to his throne; and when he was slain, in the setting up of a shortlived Latin Empire of their own, where the Greek had stood so long. False and treacherous the Greeks, from the Emperor downward, had been from the beginning, embarrassing, thwarting, and betraying the Crusaders, and for these ends oftentimes in secret league with the infidel; yet this was a shameful diverting to objects of selfish greed and ambition,—such a diversion as became only too common at a later day,—of armies gathered for quite another purpose.

In the fifth Crusade, which lasted some fourteen years, there stand out two principal figures; at its open-

ing Innocent III., who by his passionate appeals did much to revive the old crusading spirit that was waning fast ; at its close the Emperor Frederick II., grandson of Barbarossa, and one of the most enigmatic characters in history, of whom I shall need to speak more by and bye. A Crusade was indeed a strange enterprise for the Imperial freethinker ; while yet it was crowned with so much success, that what others had failed to win by utmost efforts of arms he obtained by negotiation, namely the cession of Jerusalem with some other towns, as Bethelhem and Nazareth, dear to the Christian heart (1229). These, however, did not remain long in Christian hands ; nor did it fare better with Jerusalem, which, falling once more under the dominion of the Turks, has never since been wrested from them.

The passion which animated Western Europe was now very nearly spent ; nay more, there were voices of earnest remonstrance lifted up here and there against such expeditions at all. And yet there must be two more Crusades ; or three, if we include among these the expedition of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans and brother of our Henry III. (1240) ; which, however, hardly rose to the dignity, of a Crusade. I count therefore but as two those still to come before the end should arrive ; those two, moreover, the result of one man's high-hearted devotion to that which he believed to be the cause of God, rather than to impulses moving still the popular mind and heart of Christendom. They were both exclusively French, and the nobility of France who followed St. Lewis, followed out of loyalty to their sovereign, rather than out of any lively sympathy of their own for the task he had in hand. In the first of these Lewis lost his liberty (1249) ; in the second, undertaken after an interval of more than twenty years, his life (1270).



This last abortive effort closed the list of the Crusades. This is not wonderful ; for who could hope to succeed, where the saintly King had so signally and disastrously failed ? It was quite time that they should end. Whatever work they could do was done ; whatever benefits Europe could derive from them, and these had been many, were already obtained. A new Crusade might still figure in the Papal programme as often as a new Pope came to the throne ; he might announce, as did Pope Pius II. (1458-1464), that he would himself be the leader of it ; princes, as our own Henry IV., might assume the Cross, and profess themselves bound, so soon as more urgent affairs at home would permit, for the Holy Land ; contributions might still be demanded from the faithful, and, indeed, it was sought to levy a permanent tax upon them, ' Saladin's tithe ' it was called, to meet the expenses of these coming expeditions ; nay, the rudiments of fleets and armies destined for the East were more than once gotten together, at Venice, at Genoa, and elsewhere. But these were faint umbrages and no more. All such preparations came to nothing. Men did not mean what they said, or at all events did not mean it with a whole-heartedness strong enough to overcome the manifold hindrances which, in giving actual shape and body to their intention, they were sure to encounter.

The crusading passion had fairly worn itself out. It could hardly co-exist with what I will not call the money-making spirit, for I have no wish to find fault with it, but the commercial spirit which was beginning to pervade Europe, and which these very expeditions had done so much to arouse. If the passion revived for a moment, when the fall of Constantinople (1453) revealed to Christendom the nearness and the greatness of the danger which threatened it from the Ottoman arms, this

never embodied itself in the shape of an eighth Crusade ; and those who tried to quicken it again, as for instance Pope Pius II., with an earnestness which did him much more honour than did other passages in his life, were doomed to discover the truth of the homely proverb which says that it is no use to flog a dead horse.

On the first blush of the matter the Crusades present themselves to us as a lamentable failure ; and such failure in one and in a very real sense they were. After all that prodigal expenditure of life and treasure, after nearly two centuries of toil, during which the winning back of the Holy Sepulchre had been the darling purpose of Christendom, for whose attainment no sacrifice had been counted too costly, after the loss it has been calculated of some six millions of lives, 'the world's debate' had ended, but had ended leaving all as it was at the beginning. The miscreants—for we owe that word to the Crusades, and it meant at first no more than mis-believers—still kept the spot where the Lord of Glory had lain. The Christians of the East still groaned under the yoke of their Mahomedan oppressors. The pilgrims from the West had to pay as heavy tolls for the privilege of visiting the Holy Places, on their way to these were as much exposed to insults and outrages, as ever. If the petty Latin states which still survived in the East dragged out for a while a feeble existence, they owed this temporary respite of their doom to the rivalries and discords of the Moslem enemy. But the end, delayed for a while, arrived at length ; and with the fall of Acre (1291) the last fragment and wreck disappeared of structures so dearly and painfully reared, to which generation after generation had so lavishly contributed their prayers and toils, their tears and blood.

And yet this is not the whole story. The balance sheet of history does not offer all this loss upon one side, and zero in the matter of gains upon the other. Of some of these gains I have spoken already. Let me, before we leave this theme, speak also of some other. Assuredly if Christian Europe found not what it sought, it found much that it had not sought. I will not dwell here on the new roads which commerce discovered for itself, the manifold arts and inventions which were brought back from the East; nor yet on the rise of a middle class through the impoverishing of the nobles by these costly expeditions. These were secondary, yet at the same time important, benefits which grew out of the Crusades. But other benefits were more important still. Europe, emerging from the anarchies of the earlier Middle Ages, owed to the Crusades, and to the bringing together of the nations of the West in one common enterprise, its first vigorous consciousness of constituting one body, one Christendom. Inner divisions might still set one portion of this against another; but as against all external foes henceforth it was one. Nor may we forget that, if the tide of Mahomedan invasion was not rolled back, yet for two most critical centuries it had been effectually arrested. To the Byzantine Empire were given three centuries of existence more than it would have otherwise enjoyed—a respite not without significance for the whole Western world. This arrest of the onward progress of Mahomedan arms might have been proclaimed for ever as a political necessity, but would have been proclaimed in vain. No appeal merely to the reason, but only an appeal such as this, addressing itself first and chiefly to the feelings, the passions, the imagination, the devotion of Christendom, would have profited at all, or roused the nations to a common resistance. The struggle

with Islâm has so long ceased to be a life-and-death struggle for the possession, material, moral, and spiritual, of the world that we now find it most hard to believe that such it ever should have been ; and yet, let us for a moment bethink ourselves of what, despite this check, was the tremendous pressure of Mahomedan power upon Western Christendom for centuries more, up to the Reformation and beyond it ; let us recall the names, and the associations which the names bring with them, of Rhodes and Malta, of Otranto and Vienna, of Nicopolis and Lepanto, and we shall own that the Crusades could very ill have been spared.

And then further, to them, to the high thoughts which they kindled in so many hearts, to the religious consecration which they gave to the bearing of arms, we are indebted for some of the fairest aspects of chivalry, as it survives a potent and elevating tradition to the present day. Thus to them we owe the stately courtesies of gallant foes, able to understand and to respect one another, with much else that has lifted up modern warfare into something better than a mere mutual butchery, even into a school of honour in which some of the gentlest and noblest of men have been trained. *The Happy Warrior* of Wordsworth could never have been written,—for such an ideal of the soldier could never have been conceived,—except for them. What Europe gained by the Crusades we may best measure by considering what it evidently lost by their ceasing. It is not too much to say that with their ceasing the whole physiognomy of the Middle Ages changed ; their romantic, poetic, ideal aspect in the main disappeared. To a thirteenth century, with all which it had of grandeur and beauty, a fourteenth with its comparative meanness, so poor and so prosaic, succeeded.

And lastly, we may well believe that in contact and

conflict with the Unitarians of the East, the faithful discerned, as they never had discerned before, what treasures of wisdom and grace were laid up in the Church's faith; in her faith who is Unitarian indeed, but this in a far higher sense,—confessing as she does a divine Unity, but in that Unity a Father, a Son, and a Holy Ghost the Spirit of both.

We may leave then to Lord Chesterfield and to others like-minded with him to pass their judgment on the Crusades, namely that they were 'the most immoral and wicked scheme that was ever contrived by knaves, and executed by madmen and fools against humanity;' and we may thank God that at all events history is now so written, and the past so judged, that we are not even tempted to such ignoble verdicts as this.

## LECTURE XI.

*THE PAPACY AT ITS HEIGHT.*

FEW thoughtful students of Ecclesiastical history, or indeed of any history, medieval or modern, can have failed from time to time to put this question to themselves, Was it by divine providence, or by divine permission, or, to put it somewhat lower still, by divine patience, that the dominion grew up in the Church which we call the Papacy? It is a question not easy to answer; being made the harder from the fact that the lines which divide the providence from the permission, and the permission from the patience, can often only with difficulty be drawn. Indeed we must not seldom renounce the attempt to draw them at all. An analogy has been sometimes suggested between the rise and growth of this power, and the rise and growth of the kingship in Israel; that earlier dealing of God with his people being adduced as helpful and supplying a key to the understanding of the later. Contemplated from one point of view,—for so it has been urged,—that setting up of a kingdom in which God ceased to be the only King may be looked at as the outcome of the people's sin; while yet in another aspect it was overruled by Him to fit into his scheme for the moral training and discipline of his Church. Israel's demand for a king was the outcome of the people's sin; for where would have been the need or the want of a king, if only the people had held fast to the glorious truth that God was their King, and that therefore in all their dangers

and necessities the shout as of a present King was among them? And as sin this request of theirs was regarded by Him: 'They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them' (1 Sam. viii. 7). Nevertheless, having asked a King, God gave them the King that they asked, and wove this kingship, with which He was very far from being pleased, into the grand providential scheme of his grace. Something corresponding, however remotely, to this has been traced in the Church's story. Where, it has been asked, would have been the need, or where the desire of a visible representative of Christ upon earth, if Christ Himself, the personal, ever and everywhere present, Lord of his Church, had not for most men receded very far into the distance? But this human world-centre, in place of the divine world-centre, having been constituted once, God bore with it in his infinite patience, was content to use it, so far as it was capable of being used, for his Church's good; not indeed as the final and abiding order there, but rather as that provisional arrangement which, allowed for a time, should be set aside so soon as a better order was prepared to occupy its room.

But leaving this analogy for what it is worth, and with no further attempt to look within the veil and to read what may have been passing there, let us a little consider the main circumstantial causes which, converging to a single point, wrought together for the giving to the See of Rome during the Middle Ages a preeminence and preponderance so vast and so enduring,—such as still haunts and sometimes disturbs the world with memories of what it once has been, with forebodings of what it yet may be. It is of these secondary causes, and these only, that I propose to treat.

First then among the circumstances which so mysteriously favoured the ascent of the Church of Rome to such

marvellous heights, let me draw your attention to the fact that this Church was the sole Patriarchate of the West; towering so far above every other Occidental Church that none of these so much as dreamt of disputing her rank and precedence. Not indeed that the Pope in the palmy days of his power much affected this title of Patriarch, shared by him with four others, as compared with that of Pope, which from the days of Gregory VII. was absolutely his own, and might not be given to any other or taken by him.

But if no Western Bishop could venture to dispute the preeminence of the Bishop of Rome, it was not less certain that, in any rivalry or competition with him, the Eastern Patriarchs would discover that they had to do with one stronger than them singly, with one stronger than them all combined. Before the day of their worst trouble came, before the outburst I mean of the Mahomedan Invasion, they had forfeited much of their credit and honour by unworthy disputes among themselves; not to say that presently three among them, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, if not wholly blotted out by the victorious advance of the Moslem arms, were reduced to merest ghosts of what they once had been, and henceforth subsisted only by Mahomedan sufferance. Constantinople alone remained;—but this New Rome fighting at an immense disadvantage the battle of ‘Who should be greatest?’ with the Old. All the reasons which Constantinople could adduce in her own favour were purely mundane:—as that she was the Residence, the seat of Empire, the city of the amplest wealth, wherein was treasured up the best and choicest that survived of the arts and learning of the old world, the link between that old world and the new, with other arguments moving on the same level with these. But all this, it was plain,



could profit little, when it could be claimed for the other Rome that she was planted by one Apostle, even by him to whom Christ's great promise had been made ; watered by his blood, and by the blood of another, the next in dignity to him.

Once more, the Bishop of Rome found an immense advantage in this, namely that his spiritual throne was not overshadowed by a secular and Imperial throne, set in immediate nearness to it. The Emperors of the East may have wished to treat him, and from time to time they did actually treat, as they constantly treated the Patriarch of Constantinople ; but distance did much to restrain and limit their injurious interference, and in the ninth century it ceased altogether. Neither did the peril, which was thus escaped in one shape, come back in another. Charles the Great, a genuine Teuton, did not care to make Rome the centre and capital of his dominions ; while all the fantastic schemes of Otto III., including this, his darling project of all, were cut short by his premature death (1002). German armies might from time to time cross the Alps, and might succeed, or might not succeed, in imposing the Imperial will on a recalcitrant Pope ; but attempts of this kind, desultory and intermittent, were very different from a dwelling evermore under the baleful shadow of Eastern Cæsarism. The occupant of the Papal Chair enjoyed a freedom of action, a power of independent development, an escape from the miserable and often disgraceful intrigues of the Palace, such as was altogether denied to his less fortunate rival in the East, who was now the partner of these intrigues, and now the victim, and not seldom both.

The superiority which in this matter the Old Rome possessed over the new was long ago felt and understood. Thus Dante describes Constantine as founding the city on

the Bosphoros which is called by his name, that so 'he might give the Shepherd room.' As much indeed is very clearly expressed in the forged Gift of Constantine itself; and on the assertion there made, no doubt, the statement of Dante rests. 'We have transferred,' Constantine is there made to say, 'the seat of our power and authority to the Eastern parts; seeing that where the Lord of heaven has set up the head of sacerdotal authority, it is not meet that any Emperor should have there an earthly authority.' I need hardly tell you that it is wholly a mistake to ascribe this motive to Constantine; but Dante's words express admirably well the result of the transfer of the seat of empire from the banks of the Tiber to the shores of the Bosphoros. The Latin Shepherd, and mainly through this transfer, obtained the room, the opportunities for a large and free unfolding of whatever capabilities were in him or in his office, which to his Greek rival was absolutely denied.

But there were other superiorities that belonged to Rome, and in which she left far behind, not merely that remoter rival, but every other city in the world. It was much that from her, the ancient mistress of the earth, this claim to an universal empire should proceed. We feel at once how impossible it would have been for a Bishop of Ravenna, or Milan, or Aquileia, to make good a similar pretension, even if it had entered into his heart to conceive it. But the world had been drilled and disciplined for so many centuries to the taking of its commands from the City on the banks of the Tiber, that there needed other centuries almost as many before it could unlearn this lesson of a submission which had well nigh become to it as a second nature. The new domination of Rome, 'that ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof,' as

Hobbes has called it, with only such inevitable changes as the changed world-order demanded, seemed the natural, almost the necessary, continuation of the old. Rome might sink to the rank of a second-rate provincial town, all her significance might appear to have gone from her—so more than once it had—and yet in mysterious ways this would all come back to her, as to one that could not abdicate her position though she would. Dante himself in his great prose work *On Monarchy* everywhere takes for granted that Rome was the proper and divinely appointed Queen of the earth. His, it is true, is the Ghibelline interpretation of this divine intention. It is the Emperor as representing the Roman people, and not the Pope, who is to order all things from thence.

With all their unlikenesses, with this fundamental difference between them, that one asserted a dominion over the bodies, the other over the spirits of men, the resemblance was wonderful between the earlier and the later Rome; till it seemed impossible to exorcise the spirit of statesmanship, which still haunted and would not quit the City of the Seven Hills. Christian Rome did not disdain to learn from heathen; to walk in the lines which the other had traced out; to wax great by the same methods. From Rome secular she learned how to mix herself with the affairs of her neighbours, to play the part of a mediator or umpire, to take the side of the weak against the strong:—breaking down, for example, the power of Metropolitans by her support of Bishops in their conflicts with them, the Bishops, when their natural leaders were gone, being incapable of resistance, and falling an easy prey in their turn. In this and in other like ways she knew how to obtain a footing for herself, that, once gotten, was not lost again; to advance pretensions which, if the time was not ripe for them, might

remain dormant for a while, or, where this seemed safer, might be withdrawn altogether. If heathen Rome sent out her proconsuls, Christian Rome could boast that she too had her legates to carry her behests through the world, that for her the prophetic words of the Psalmist were fulfilled, 'Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.'

It is impossible to say of Rome secular how early the thought arose in her heart, that let her only be true to herself and she should in due time be the queen of the world; yet a dim prophetic instinct may have very early stirred within her that she was thus predestined to a mighty doom. As little can we tell at what date in other hearts the idea of the Papacy, of an universal spiritual kingdom, with the Bishop of Rome as its priest-king, arose. Certainly it obscurely wrought, claims being put forth inconsistent with the liberties of other Churches, at a very early date,—not first during the Pontificate and in the heart of Leo the Great (440–461), however much by his abilities and his virtues he may have done unconsciously to prepare the way for results which in their full accomplishment were still many centuries in the distance.

Nor may we leave out of sight a claim on the part of the Roman Bishop that his should be regarded as the court of final appeal, and he the supreme judge and arbiter before whom all arduous or important causes might be brought,—this 'might' at a later day being changed into a 'must.' It was a claim which dated from a time anterior to that of which we are treating, and found this much to support it, namely that at the Council of Sardica (347) there was by the Council attributed to the Bishop of Rome a power of revision, so that, if any Bishop was dissatisfied with an ecclesiastical sentence, he might demand of the Roman Bishop to institute a new investiga-

tion :—I need hardly observe that the constituting of such a Court of Cassation was purely an ecclesiastical arrangement, and was never supposed at the time to rest on any divine right. For all this it is easy to perceive how much there was, when once that claim had obtained partial admission, to nurse it into ever greater strength. In instances out of number the party worsted before some other tribunal would attempt to mend his position by a course which might better, but which could scarcely make it worse ; for on one thing an appellant could securely count, namely that there would be a certain predisposition to regard him with favour. Neither, coming for help to Rome, was he likely to be under very strict self-restraint in the language which he used. He would declare that he came to that tribunal which was the last refuge of the oppressed ; that his sole hope was in the justice of the Roman Pontiff, who, and who only, had authority to redress the wrong which he had endured ; with much more in the same tone. It was not in the nature of things that suppliants such as these should be repelled. We know that they were not, but were in every way encouraged ; that no injury at Rome was resented more keenly than the putting by any secular or ecclesiastical power of hindrances in the way of such appeals.

Then, exactly when they were needed the most, in the earlier half, that is, of the ninth century (about 845), the famous Decretals, which claimed, but falsely, to have Isidore of Seville for their collector or editor, began here and there to be heard of. Decretals (*Litteræ Decretales*), let me say, were decisions by the Pope of causes and questions brought before him, which decisions thenceforth constituted a part of the Church's law. Such collections, with their falsifications of history more or less daring,

there had been before, and have been since. But these supplied exactly what was then wanted. The fatal fault and flaw in the whole Roman pretension lay in its un-historic character; in the fact that so much which was now confidently claimed had not been even heard of in the first three or four centuries. Some have tried in our own time to remedy this flaw by aid of the doctrine of development—with what success, each may judge for himself. This ingenious scheme had not then been devised, or at any rate existed only in the germ. But here in these Decretals was all which was needed. Here were letters of the early Popes, beginning from Clement; decrees of early Councils, all of them bearing out and sustaining to the full the latest and largest pretensions of Rome. If only these were authentic, there was no authority, preeminence, jurisdiction challenged by a Pope of the ninth century, which had not been challenged and allowed in the first or the second. The Popes, I believe, may be acquitted of any share in the forgery, for forged the far larger number of these Decretals have long since on all sides been acknowledged to be. When too they appealed to these—Nicolas I. was the first who did so (858),—they did this in good faith, being deceived, as almost all the world was deceived. Indeed Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims (d. 882), who in more matters than one so boldly resisted Nicolas, is perhaps the only exception. It has indeed been recently urged that these Decretals were not originally thrust upon the Church with any purpose of setting forward Papal ambitions; and other ingenious explanations of their primary intention have not been wanting. But let these possess what truth they may, the Decretals did not the less effectually do their work; and, most remarkable of all, the complete demolition of their authority failed to shake in the slightest the huge

fabric which had been gradually reared on the assumption of their authentic character ; and up to this present day they remain the boldest, the most stupendous, and the most successful forgery that the world has ever seen.

But professing to enumerate the chief causes which, working together, enabled the Church of Rome to leave so far behind her in dignity, in authority, in power, all the sister Churches of Christendom, it would be unworthy to pass over some of a different character from those on which hitherto we have dwelt. Thus assuredly we should not leave out of account, as having wrought to this end more than any other of these causes, the succession of statesmen, and these of the very highest order, who, often at the most critical moments, and just when they were required the most, occupied the Papal throne. We may form what judgment we will about them in other respects ; but none, I think, can deny this praise of high statesmanship to Leo I., to Gregory the Great, to Nicolas I., to Gregory VII., to Alexander III., to Innocent III. ; not to speak of many others who, if they may not take rank with these, yet did each contribute his stone to that wondrous edifice which thus grew from age to age, till it seemed that its top was to reach even to heaven.

As little should we omit as an element of strength and power for the Church of Rome the fact that she had taken the side which finally triumphed,—in other words, the right side, in almost all the principal controversies which had agitated the early Church. She did so notably in that with the Arians ; so also,—with two memorable exceptions on the part of Vigilius (540–555) and Honorius I. (625–638), but these sufficient to defeat her claim to Infallibility,—in the long and confused struggle with Monophysites and Monothelites, which followed the

Council of Chalcedon ; until it grew to a popular conviction that the side which Rome took in any doctrinal struggle was the side which would triumph in the end.

Nor were other moral forces wanting to her. It would have been little to the honour of Christendom, if it had slavishly bowed the neck to a yoke which was nothing better than simply a yoke imposed by superior power. Who can doubt that in ages of savagery and violence, ages in which all laws of God and man were so recklessly trampled under foot, it was much, and was felt to be much, that there should be in the world one man, who could, and who sometimes did, rebuke without fear or favour the strongest and proudest of the wrongdoers, the men of the earth, who were willing to persuade themselves that everything was permitted to them ? Amid all the tyrannies and oppressions with which the earth was full, how often the deep cry of an agonizing question must have gone up from the hearts of men, Is there anywhere in earth or heaven a Father, one with a Father's heart ? Is there anywhere a King, the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre ? And here was one claiming to be all this, a King ruling in righteousness, the immediate image upon earth of the Universal Father in heaven. And righteous interferences in the world, such as in their measure might justify these titles which he claimed, were not wanting upon his part. Thus, on more than one memorable occasion the sanctity of the marriage tie was upheld and vindicated by him against the wanton caprice of the mighty of the earth, who would fain have made the laws of God to bow to the lusts of men. So too, if the Popes were very far from guiltless in the matter of those hideous and constantly recurring outrages against the Jews, which, as we read of them, make us well nigh ashamed of the Christian name, yet from them oftener



than from any other quarter earnest protests against outrages which were an especial disgrace of the Middle Ages, proceeded.

Much was borne with for the sake of this witness, the one witness, as it often seemed, in all the world to a kingdom of heaven, to the fatherhood of God : and thus the ascent of Rome to those heights which at last she reached, was by no means always that hard and uphill struggle of a power whose claims were everywhere met by incredulity and opposition. There was a time when, upborne by the high tides of popular feeling, she rather took what was brought or came to her of its own accord than went out of her way to seize that which would have willingly been withholden from her. There was a time above all, when the weaker Churches, conscious of their separate helplessness as against the mailed and sceptred robbers and ruffians of the earth, clung to her with the natural gravitation of the weak to the strong, of the helpless to a Helper ; while it was only at a later day that the protector proved to be the worst oppressor, and the mother no mother at all, but a harshest stepmother instead.

It is true that this aspect of the medieval Papacy as the redresser of wrongs, the upholder of right, has in our own day sometimes been pressed very much farther than the actual facts of history would warrant. If we would at all arrive at a truthful balance sheet, then over against the interpositions on the side of right must be set others on the side of wrong : the unrighteous wars which Rome fostered or directly brought about ; the subjects whom she released from their allegiance, and invited to rebellion against their lawful lords ; the sons whom she encouraged to wage unnatural war against their fathers ; the princes, as for instance Charles of Anjou, whom by

some huge bribe she induced to seize what was not hers to give, nor theirs to take ; the Papal mantle of allowance thrown by her over hatefulest deeds of cruelty and wrong, as for example the judicial murder of the Templars. Setting these against those, this balance sheet of history will present results very far different from such as we are now sometimes invited to accept ; for indeed the whole notion of Western Christendom as in any age a complex of States, all recognizing the Roman Pontiff as the umpire of their quarrels, all inviting and all acquiescing in his decisions, and indeed the whole dream of a golden age brought by those wicked Reformers to a violent close, is a fancy picture, to which the actual facts present no corresponding reality. There never was a golden age for the Church ; and there never will be, till Christ, her Lord, shall come ; but every age will be full of scandals and shames : none were more crowded with such than the ages of which we are treating now. Doubtless in every quarrel it was always well worth the while for either of the contending parties to have Rome on its side ; and one or other, and not seldom both, sought to secure this advantage. Where they did not invite interposition, and anything was to be gained by interposing, she would push her way unsolicited, oftentimes unwelcomed and unaccepted, into the strife ; and demanding to act as arbiter, would throw her weight, often into the right scale, not seldom into the wrong. That from time to time she effected something which no other could have effected, for the maintaining or for the restoring of the peace of Christendom, for the substituting of a higher law between nations than the brutal law of the strongest, no one who knows the facts and deals honestly with them will deny ; but all this in a very imperfect, in a very human way, with faults of temper, of greed of

gain, of lust of dominion, and other faults innumerable, which continually marred the very best which she did.

Let us consider a little the Papacy as Hildebrand left it. It gives some sort of measure of the rapidity with which new claims were pushed ever in advance of old, that the Decretals, so effective in their own time, were already felt in his to fall quite behind ; very inadequately to express the rights and prerogatives of him who occupied the throne and inherited the authority of St. Peter ; so that new historical supports had need to be found to sustain the new pretensions ; the same thing happening again when in turn Innocent III. had filled in much which Gregory had left only in outline. In the finding of these historical supports there was indeed no sort of difficulty. What was wanted was always forthcoming, or, if not forthcoming, there were always the Canonists ready with new law, or with new interpretations of old, whereby anything and everything could be justified. It is true that in one sense the Papacy of Hildebrand was hardly capable of any further development. It was scarcely possible to advance loftier claims than he had advanced. Much however had yet to be made good ; much had been boldly sketched by him, but waited to be filled in by some other hand ; much existed in theory, but had not yet been embodied in practice. Herein lies the difference between his position and that of Innocent III. But so far as claims could go, all was already his own. The Pope, who at first had been content as Vicar of St. Peter to be recognized as the foremost in rank and dignity among the Bishops of the Church, with a primacy of honour, demanded now as Vicar of God to be acknowledged as in some sort its only Bishop ; making no scruple to name himself Universal Bishop, a title which Gregory's

great namesake and predecessor had repudiated as inconsistent with the rights and prerogatives of the other members of the Episcopate. Not to the collective Episcopate, as was now declared, but to him alone had the government of the Church, with the authority to bind and loose, been confided ; for to Peter alone had it been said, ' Feed my sheep,' ' Feed my lambs.' All other Episcopal authority was but an emanation of his. He might invite others to a participation of the toil, but the plenitude of the power remained still with himself.

That the Pope only could canonize—this, claimed first by Alexander III. as his exclusive right, and sometimes charged against him as a usurpation—as matters stood, was reasonable enough. If there was to be such a spiritual peerage, and the idea is a very grand one, the creation of it could scarcely be in any other hands save his ; he must be the one fountain of honour. But other and more serious prerogatives he had also made his own. Thus the Pope alone could call Councils ; and even a General Council, when called, could do no more than advise. He could dispense with every law of the Church which was not divine. Somewhat later there were not wanting those who in their frantic sycophancy affirmed that his word, who was as a second God upon earth (*quasi alter Deus*), could make right out of wrong, justice out of injustice ; that he could dispense with every law ; that any concordats or other agreements into which he was pleased to enter were binding on the other party, but were not binding upon him.

It was only at a later day that, as against this theory of the Pope as the sole depositary of spiritual power, another theory was advanced, whereof the famous Parisian Doctors, of whom by and bye, were the main upholders. According to this, so far from one man

engrossing all Church authority in himself, and merely dividing off to others such portions of this as he pleased, the parochial Clergy were in direct succession from the Seventy, the Bishops from the Apostles, and the Pope from St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles ; all those others having as direct a commission from Christ as he had, and having indeed received a power, as it was pointedly described, *under* the Pope (*sub Papâ*), but by no means *from* the Pope (*a Papâ*). I shall also have to tell you before long what little permanent effect these Doctors were able to give to this or any other theory of theirs.

It is generally admitted that the medieval Papacy attained its highest pitch of splendour and power in the time and in the person of Innocent III. ; that he approached nearer to the realizing of that idea after which it was striving than any who preceded him, than any who followed after. True to my scheme of bringing a few of the prominent persons in Church history before you, rather than seeking to fill the scene with many who are not prominent, and who only serve to obscure those that are, I will rapidly trace some leading features of his Pontificate ; which done, I shall bring this Lecture to a close.

Cardinal Lothair, of a noble Roman family, was only thirty-seven when, in view of the struggle with the House of Hohenstaufen, which was only half fought out and presently must revive again, he was called by the unanimous voice of the Conclave to the post of highest dignity and authority in the Church (1198). If any proof was wanting, there was proof now of the important step which had been taken, when the election of a Pope was withdrawn from the hands of the Roman Clergy, magistrates, and people, in which at one time it had resided, and was

transferred to the College of Cardinals. This significant change was effected in 1059 by Nicolas II., acting under the influence of Hildebrand, Pope already in all but name. It is easy to see how much in unity of aim the Papacy must by this have gained, delivered as thus it was from gusts of popular passion and caprice, and able to continue and carry on through long years a policy which had once been determined. If it incurred new and untried dangers through this close election, how many old dangers, of which it had abundant experience, it in this way escaped. On the present occasion there was hereby brought to the front the man fittest for a great emergency whom the Church possessed.

There is much to provoke a comparison between him and Hildebrand, who alone among all the Popes is comparable with him,—points of likeness as of difference. Innocent was quite as strongly the hierarch as Gregory had been; he advanced claims quite as extravagant. When he said, ‘The Lord bequeathed to Peter not merely the government of the Universal Church, but the whole secular estate,’ another could not have said more. And on the faith of this he acted. Thus there was hardly a monarch in Europe whom he did not make in one way or another to feel his hand, ‘binding their kings with chains and their nobles with links of iron;’ measuring himself not with petty princes alone, as of Portugal, of Leon, or of Aragon, but with the mightiest potentates on earth. Philip Augustus of France after an obstinate resistance was by him compelled to take back the wife whom on some frivolous pretext he had put away; and we are all more or less familiar with the shameful story of our own King John, how he acknowledged himself ‘the Pope’s man,’ resigned to him his crown and sceptre, and received these back from him to hold, he and his successors,

as the Pope's vassals henceforward (1207-1213). Of Innocent's part in the struggle with the Hohenstaufens I shall need to speak in my next Lecture.

But in him the hierarch did not swallow up the Chief Shepherd. Innocent was diligent in preaching. 'The just shall live by faith' was the text of his sermon at his own consecration. It may be monkish piety which his ascetic writings breathe, but piety it is. He had, I am persuaded, the removal of the monstrous scandals in the Church which drove so many into wildest opposition to her, quite as much at heart as any among these; although his position may have made it many times more difficult for him than for others to discern the true character of the evils which demanded a remedy. His letters do not deal merely with questions affecting the honour, glory, and worldly prosperity of the Church; but not seldom with the redressing the wrongs of the humblest; and attest that, if he regarded himself as the Judge of all the earth, he accepted the toil and responsibilities implied in this name, the terribleness as well as the grandeur of such a preeminence.

Pope Innocent's was in outward aspects a splendid Pontificate. He was never tried in the furnace of a fiery trial, submitted to the touchstone of adversity, as Hildebrand had been. No antipope, challenging his right to the tiara, entangled him in miserable disputes where victory was almost as ignominious as defeat. If once at the beginning of his reign he found it expedient to withdraw from Rome, yet no popular tumult chased him, as it chased so many before and after, from an insurgent city. Magnificent above all was the close of that Pontificate, when at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the so-called Twelfth Œcumenic, the representatives of two Emperors, all the Eastern Patriarchs in person or by

proxy (for it was the time of the brief Latin kingdom), seventy Primates or Metropolitans, more than four hundred Bishops, and eight hundred other Prelates, all acknowledging him as their head, took counsel with him for the interests of Christendom, or, to speak more accurately, received the law from his lips.

Some dim presentiment that this gorgeous pageant was very soon about to dissolve, that the end was very near, may have moved him to appropriate, in his opening address to the Council, words of an infinite solemnity, and such as required not a little boldness even for him to make his own : ' With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer ' (Luke xxii. 16). And the end *was* near, even at the door. A few months had not elapsed, and all the mighty projects, the new Crusade, the reformation of morals alike in the Clergy and in the laity, the extirpation of heresy, must fall to the ground, or be accomplished by other hands than his. Innocent died in his fifty-fifth year (1216), but not before he had reaped to the full that harvest of greatness which Nicolas I., Gregory VII., Alexander III., with many more, had so patiently and so boldly sown.

And yet, let me say in parting from him, that, if time would permit, it might be well worth while, over against all which he accomplished, to set all which either he failed to accomplish ; or which it would have been much better if he had failed to accomplish ; or which, so soon as ever he was withdrawn, reverted at once to its former tracks : even as failure in carrying out an idea such as his was inevitable ; seeing that to realize this idea nothing less than omnipotence, and this wielded by omniscience, was required. In the absence of these it remains ' the grandest and most magnificent failure in human history.'



## LECTURE XII.

*THE POPES AND THE HOHENSTAUFEN.*

THE antagonism between the spiritual and the secular ruler of Western Christendom, as I have already more than once observed, did more to shape medieval history, and to give it its peculiar character, than any of the other forces which were then working, potent as, no doubt, were some of these. The antagonism itself was inevitable; and not less inevitable that it should force itself to the front, and refuse to be remitted to the sphere of abstract opinions about which men might consent to differ. 'These two powers, the Empire and the Papacy, had grown up with indefinite and necessarily conflicting relations; each at once above and beneath the other; each sovereign and subject, with no distinct limits of sovereignty or subjection; each acknowledging the supremacy of the other, but each reducing that supremacy to a name or less than a name. The authority of each depended on loose and flexible tradition, on variable and contradictory precedents, on titles of uncertain signification, Head of the Church, Vicar of Christ; Patrician, King of Italy, Emperor. The Emperor boasted himself successor to the whole autocracy of the Cæsars, to Augustus, Constantine, Charlemagne; the Pope to that of St. Peter, or of Christ Himself' (Milman).

The contention on the part of the spiritual power, as it uttered itself by him who was the incarnation of this,

was as follows : ‘ Men’s souls are infinitely more precious than their bodies. The heavenly life is immeasurably more important than the earthly. The training of men’s souls for that heavenly life has been committed to my charge, and I can suffer no interference with it. And first and chiefly the ministers of this kingdom, which is higher than all the kingdoms of this world, must hold of me, must own no allegiance which may compete or interfere with this prior and superior allegiance to me. Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm. If they need correction, let them be remitted for this to me.’ We know what the answer was. Our Henry II. uttered it with all clearness ; not without many faults in the manner of his utterance, but with a rightful sense that there must be only one law in the realm, and that to this all, whether priests or laymen, must submit. ‘ These,’ the King replied, ‘ whom you claim to belong only to you, belong also to a mundane order of things of which I am chief minister, and if they violate that order they shall suffer for it as any other. You offer indeed to degrade them for any great offence, that so, being deprived of their spiritual character, they may, should they offend a second time, be dealt with and punished, as any other layman would be. But what is this but securing to every clergyman, to not a few who have taken the inferior orders, with no other view than that of making this “ benefit of Clergy ” their own, absolute impunity for their first offence, however atrocious this may be ? Kings are of God as well as Popes ; set to be a terror to all evil-doers ; and criminous clerks shall receive at our hands the due reward of their deeds no less than criminous laymen.’ Impossible as it is to gainsay the justice of this answer, or to take our stand where Becket, as embodying the Church’s claim, took his, there was in that twelfth

century more to be urged in that claim's behalf than at first sight might appear. Licence for the Clergy to do open wrong without being duly punished for it, this assuredly was not the object for which our great Archbishop contended and died. The untenable nature of his demand and of the arguments by which he defended this demand we can now see clearly enough ; but it was very far from being then so clear.

If I refrain from entering at full into this struggle, from weighing the several rights and wrongs of the chief actors in it, this will not be as underrating its significance ; but it is in truth such a thrice-told tale, has in these last times been told so often and by such masters in the art of narration, that I shrink from going over the ground again. If there are any passages in English history with which it may be taken for granted that you are more or less acquainted, it is those which relate to the conflict between Henry II. and his Archbishop and Chancellor ; on my own part too I shall gladly devote the time thus gained to the setting forth some other less familiar aspects of that same struggle, as it wrought itself out upon a larger stage.

Your attention has been already called to the first grand collision which grew out of the irreconcilable pretensions of the kingdom and the priesthood, the civil and the spiritual power. You have heard how the quarrel, provoked by Gregory VII., not without a measure of right upon his side, seemed to have found its settlement in the Concordat of Worms. But the compromise which goes by this name was a truce and no more ; the prologue, or perhaps more properly, the first act of a portentous drama, which was not nearly played out. Two other acts were to follow ; the second closing with the Treaty of Constance (1183), the third with the final extinction of the

House of Hohenstaufen (1268). It is quite true that this struggle, in its second act and its third, was not so predominantly one for spiritual objects as that of the Investitures had been. There were fair kingdoms of this world which should prove the prize of the victor, with other earthly things precious, whereon Emperor and Pope had alike set their heart. It will be my task to put before you to-day some of the leading features of the conflict, the several aids and alliances with which the combatants entered upon it, the alternations of victory and defeat, and then the close and what this implied.

This conflict, let me say at the outset, had features of its own, which distinguished it alike from some that went before and from others that came after. It was a struggle not for victory upon some one point, but upon all; such as should for ever determine who should reign and who should serve; and, with all the fair words that from time to time passed between the combatants during the treacherous pauses of the battle, there was no self-deception upon either side as to its real meaning,—that it could only end with the complete subjugation of the one or of the other. It has been called, and with a certain justice, the struggle of a hundred years. But you must not be misled by these words as though they implied open hostility, the raging of a war without disguise, for all this time. There was nothing of the kind; but every possible variety of relation, the actual clash of arms being rather the exception. Thus there were times, although these were brief, when, having some identical objects and interests to promote, Emperor and Pope were in real alliance; when they hunted heretics in couples, and in other ways played into each other's hands. Thus Frederick Barbarossa delivered Arnold of Brescia, a most dangerous innovator, as men esteemed, and that alike in

Church and in State, being the first who had proposed the entire separation of these two, to the will of the Pope (1155); while the second Frederick, probably believing nothing himself, sent unbelievers and heretics by scores to the stake. There were times of simulated friendship, each watching and waiting his opportunity to do the other a mischief, each in secret correspondence with the other's mortal foes. And lastly there were times when the mask was dropped, and it was war to the outrance, each of the contending powers rallying all the forces and means of annoyance which it had at command, and bringing these to bear upon the foe.

Another mistake you must avoid ; for it would be a mistake to suppose of these two powers, locked as they so often were in a mortal embrace of hate, that either sought the entire destruction of the other. What each sought was the other's submission ; that the grand question running through all medieval history, ' Which is the greatest ? ' should be decided in its own favour. Neither desired, nor indeed could have so much as conceived, the total disappearance of the other ; the world-king and the world-priest belonging alike to the eternal order of God's moral universe. What, moreover, would have been the value of a Pope's triumph, if there had been no Emperor whom he might keep starving in the cold at his gate for days, or on whose neck he might literally or figuratively plant his foot ? What, in like manner, would an Emperor's complete success have been worth, unless there had been still a Pope, whom, as a kind of chief chaplain, he might order about at his will, like any other officer of his Court ? It was in the drawing of the boundary line which separated the several jurisdictions, and in the attempt so to draw it that all substantial power should remain on one side, that the never-dying source of contention lay.

Mainly, but not exclusively, on Italian soil that long struggle whose crisis arrived in the time of the Emperors of the Hohenstaufen line was fought out;—Italy, dowered with her fatal gift of beauty, being doomed to suffer unspeakable outrages and wrongs from the rude German hosts, barbarians in her eyes, which trampled upon her as their victim and their prey. But what she suffered in one shape she could inflict in another. Intrigues set on foot at Rome were only too successful in stimulating the anarchy of Germany. The Imperial dignity, tossed from one princely House to another, from Frankish to Saxon, to Suabian, to Bavarian, resisted all attempts to compel it for any length of time to continue in one stay. It was indeed a leading object in the policy of the Roman Court, and one whereof it never lost sight, to hinder the Empire from becoming hereditary in any single House; and thus to avert the knitting of the German races into a single nation, as might so easily have ensued if once a ruling family with hereditary rights could have been founded. On more occasions than one this seemed likely; but in the end by one fatality or another all hopes which tended in this direction invariably came to nothing. The task of perpetuating the weakness by maintaining and multiplying the divisions of Germany was only too easy. Each new election might safely be trusted to leave behind it many disappointed ambitions, one or more defeated competitors prepared to head an opposition, sometimes an open revolt against successful rivals, so that an anti-Cæsar was never difficult to find.

Rome, by the very necessities of her position, was in a manner driven to this activity of intrigue against the peace and prosperity, above all against the unity, of Germany. But apart from this, it was not a small misfor-

tune that so many among the noblest of the German monarchs, instead of addressing themselves to the reducing to some sort of order the anarchy of their own kingdom, should again and again be drawn away to the pursuit beyond the Alps of objects shadowy, remote, unattainable, or having no real worth even if for the moment attained; that in this same pursuit the flower of German manhood, from generation to generation, should whiten the battle-fields of Italy with their bones, or perish by deadlier though invisible foes, by the fever and the malaria, which then as now brooded over the land, and girdled Rome above all as with a very girdle of death.

But what the Popes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries dreaded perhaps even more than German unity, was the meeting of the Imperial Crown and that of the Two Sicilies on a single head. With the Norman adventurers who had planted their foot in South Italy, and little by little had founded principalities, and in the end a kingdom there, there had been hostile collisions at the first. But the Pope and the Normans had not failed to perceive after a while that they needed and could effectually help one another, so that these Norman settlements, instead of a menace to the Papacy, had become rather a support and a defence. Should however the Crowns meet on one head, the case would be very different. Cooped and confined,—with an enemy, it might be, on either side,—what room would there be for the Pope to breathe? Or, should matters come to the worst, what avenue of escape from his foes would be open to him? This union of the two Crowns upon one head, dreaded so much, which should set the Pope as between two fires, actually came to pass, despite of the most earnest Papal resistance, when Henry, son of Frederick Barbarossa,

married Constantia, the Norman inheritress of those fair southern lands (1186); but was very far from drawing after it that accession of strength to the Empire which friends had hoped, and enemies had feared.

Let me briefly sketch the course which the actual conflict took. I observed in a former Lecture that the Empire was very poorly represented in the first grand clash of arms between the two powers which divided the world,—Henry IV. being ill to match with Gregory VII. The same could not be now affirmed. If the battle was one of giants, the giants were not all ranged on one side. How grand, and at times how pathetic, is the procession of the chief actors in this long tragedy, as they sweep across the historic stage; for we are now in the heart of the Middle Ages, and they are yielding their mightiest and most wondrous births. Of Frederick Barbarossa or Red Beard, as the Italians, with their fondness for nick-names derived from personal peculiarities, called him, one of the noblest figures of medieval history, let something first be spoken. ‘A magnificent and magnanimous man,’ says Carlyle; ‘a terror to evil-doers and a praise to well-doers in this world, probably beyond what was ever seen since; whom also we salute across the centuries, as a choice Beneficence of heaven.’ Greatest Emperor since Charles, unless indeed Otto I. should dispute the palm of greatness with him; great-grandson of Henry IV., inheritor therefore of an unfinished feud; he was as profoundly convinced that he wore the Imperial Crown by the grace of God, that he was God’s second Vicar upon earth, as ever Pope was convinced that he sat by immediate delegation from Christ in the Chair of St. Peter. Frederick, I believe, always meant to be just; but his justice not seldom hardened into severity,—that we call it by no harsher name,—when he had to do with those whom he



counted rebels and revolvers from the authority by God committed to him. Generous he was, and word-keeping; of unstained private life; able, when the battle was won, and, harder still, when the battle was lost, to forget and to forgive; so that one does not praise him over-much who has recently styled him 'the noblest type of medieval chivalry in many of its shadows, in all its lights.' 'The Xerxes of the Middle Ages' Sismondi has called him, but wholly misapprehending the man and his work. It is not merely that there was nothing of the effeminate Sultan in him, who did not sit upon a throne and look on while others were spending their lives for him, but was ever himself found in the 'high places of the field.' Not this, however, but another charge this comparison is probably intended to convey,—namely, that as Xerxes was the lawless invader of Greece, so Frederick of Italy. Such was not the fact. He came thither, no doubt a strong man armed, but in the assertion of strictly legal rights. That as King of Italy and wearer of the Iron Crown he possessed some rights, even those who opposed him the most admitted, only contesting the extent and character of such rights. It might have been better if he had recognized that, in an altered condition of things, those rights were growing, or had grown, into wrongs, and had abstained from pressing them. It is easy enough for us, with the scroll of history unrolled before us, with no pride, no passion, no interests warping our judgment, to see this; but it is an extravagant injustice when the fact that he did not renounce or let fall those claims of his, is laid against him as a crime.

The great commercial and manufacturing cities of Lombardy, rapidly growing into sovereign and independent commonwealths, could ill brook the resuscitation of claims which seemed to them to belong to a dead past.

These cities, or the richer, stronger, more populous among them,—Milan above all,—were allies upon whom the Pope, if it came to the worst, could securely rely; even as he found it well worth his while to appear as the champion of their liberties, and to play the part of chief demagogue of Italy. The inner bonds might be slight between him and them; but so far as those who have the same enemies are allies and friends, he and they were such; and it is hardly too much to say that if the Papacy was able to bring this tremendous struggle to a victorious close, it owed this triumph quite as much to the Lombard League as to its own spiritual weapons, excommunication and interdict; upon which, indeed, it was very far from exclusively relying.

When Frederick crossed the Alps, to revive claims which, through the internal troubles of Germany, had been long in abeyance, it might have seemed at first as though all which he demanded would be yielded to him, without his needing to have recourse to arms. The Lombard cities, indeed, stood sullenly aloof, but did not at once make up their minds to resistance. Pope Adrian IV. (1154–1159),—he was the only Englishman who ever sat in the Chair of St. Peter,—accepted with the best grace he could a visit which he was unable to avert, and set the Golden Crown of Empire on Frederick's head. With all this it is curious to note the vein of suspicion which from the first ran through the intercourse of these two, their inability to refrain from petty slights and irritations of each other. Thus the Emperor, according to a custom as old, some averred, as Constantine, did upon certain great occasions lead the palfrey of the Pope, and hold his stirrup when he alighted. The complaints were loud upon Adrian's part that this mark of respect was turned into an insult, Frederick having held the left

stirrup when he should have held the right; to which the other thought it enough to reply that the Hohenstaufens had not much experience in the duties of a groom, and that thus the mistake was not very wonderful. Other complaints too there were, grounded in the main on small breaches of etiquette, although not without their significance. Nor was the Emperor without his counter-plaints, and his just indignation at a march which the Pope sought to steal upon him; but on these I cannot enter.

Resistance began in the Lombard cities. They could not accommodate themselves to the new order of things. Pope Adrian, whose griefs were not all so fantastic as one which I have just related, was drawn before long, by the inevitable drift of things, to the taking part with his natural allies; and thus the long woe began. In this first shock of arms, a shock which lasted for some two and twenty years (1154–1176), victory, inclining at the outset to the banners of the Emperor, was not true to these to the end. Seven German armies had crossed the Alps at his bidding; Milan he had twice taken; once he had it razed to the ground (1162), but only to see it rise from its ashes more powerful than ever; while his son's son was destined to learn what a harvest of undying hate he had thus sown in Italian hearts. Defeated at Legnano (1176), one of the battles which are the turning points of history, he accepted the inevitable, renounced by the treaty of Constance (1183) all save a few shadowy and well-nigh nominal rights over the Lombard cities; and, yet bitterer humiliation, recognized Alexander III. (1159–1181), against whom he had raised up three antipopes in succession, as the rightful spiritual chief of Christendom. With all this Frederick was formidable still, and had by no means renounced his hope of bringing back the relations of Pope and Emperor to what they

had been in the times of Charles and of the Ottos. But his part in story was played. The tidings of the actual fall of Jerusalem (1187) suspended for a little the quarrels of the West. The grand old warrior King girded himself for his latest task, and, drowned in crossing a little river in Asia Minor, died as he would have wished to die, leading a crusading host to the rescue of the Sepulchre where his Lord had lain (1190).

His son and successor Henry VI. inherited none of his virtues, but he did inherit his energy of purpose, his far-reaching designs ; and these never seemed nearer their accomplishment than now. Alexander III.,—a great pontiff, though he may not quite take rank with the greatest, and we see him at his weakest in his relations to Thomas of Canterbury,—had past away. Against Henry, in the full vigour of his youth, was arrayed a feeble nonagenarian, Cælestin III. But deaths altogether unexpected more than once during the course of this struggle brought safety to the Papacy ; and, when the outlook for it was the darkest, changed in an instant the whole aspect of affairs. So was it now ; Henry, dying in his thirty-second year, left behind him a son of two years old (1197). Pope Cælestin, swiftly following him to the grave (1198), was succeeded by Pope Innocent III. Where there was strength before, there was weakness now ; and where weakness, there was strength.

The infant son of Henry had been already elected King of the Romans, but this election was now set aside. And yet, strange to say, it was with Innocent's active goodwill and favour, it was furnished with Papal gold and a Papal blessing, that the young Frederick, some fifteen years later, being then only seventeen years old, aspired to the Imperial throne, and took it, so to speak, by storm (1212). The Pope, confident in his strength, and nothing

doubting that he could mould to his will the stripling who had grown up as his ward, little guessed that this second Frederick should prove a more dangerous foe than ever the first had been. It was he whom his wondering contemporaries hailed as the *Stupor Mundi*, the 'Astonishment of the World.' This title, or one very closely resembling it, had been already given to Otto III.; but he, 'inheritor of unfulfilled renown,' died too soon to show how far he deserved it. Poet and scholar, legislator and warrior, busy with manifold speculations about manifold things, Frederick was in many ways far in advance of his age; which may have resented this superiority of his, and in its judgments of him may possibly have wronged him; he, if this was so, offering, as it must be owned, not a little provocation for any injustice that it did him. By his mother Constantia's side Italian blood was in his veins; and all his sympathies were Italian. Not in rugged Germany, but on the sunny shores of the Mediterranean, most of all at Palermo, he loved to keep his Court, so brilliant, dissolute, and refined. Cruel he was, as voluptuaries so often are, though not as his father had been; shocking too the public opinion of Christendom by the familiar terms on which he lived with his Saracen subjects,—by the mocking words, the shafts of scorn and unbelief, which, as men reported, he launched against holiest mysteries of our faith. Dante, Ghibelline as he was, must have given credit to these reports; for he places Frederick, and him alone among the Emperors, in hell, and among the heresiarchs there. A sceptic rather than an absolute unbeliever I should take him to have been; a sharer, that is, in the misgivings about the truth of revealed religion, which were far more widely spread in the 'ages of faith' than we commonly

assume them to have been, and in the thirteenth century above all.

Fair words and friendly offices were exchanged for a season between Innocent and Frederick ; but it was not long before the inborn antagonism between Pope and Hohenstaufen revealed itself once more ; and the open conflict between them, inevitable from the first, was close at hand, when the death of Innocent deferred its outbreak for a while. Honorius III. (1216-1227), a man of peace, would have fain patched up the quarrel, but this could not be. Not so Gregory IX. (1227-1241), who on the first provocation, flinging the scabbard away, addressed himself to the conflict with an energy which seventy-seven years, for so many he numbered at his election, could not abate ; no, nor yet the ninety and more to which he had attained when he bequeathed the conflict, still undecided, to his successor. Frederick in an unlucky hour had taken upon him the crusader's vow, which yet he showed no readiness to fulfil, aware, no doubt, of the advantage which his enemies would make of his absence from his dominions. It was a terrible hold which he had given to them, and they did not fail to use it to the uttermost. Excommunicated again and again, for not going to the Holy Land according to his vow, for going without the Papal benediction, for returning without the Papal leave ; every place which he profaned with his presence stricken with an Interdict ; heaven and earth fighting against him,—for so in that age it must have seemed to most, sometimes perhaps, as sorrow following sorrow lighted upon him, to himself,—there yet were no signs of yielding in him.

One deceitful truce calling itself a peace might follow upon another ; negotiations might go forward even in the midst of arms ; but the distrust on both sides was too

profound, the enmity too strong, for these ever to lead to any result. New griefs on either side were urged ; and then presently it thundered and lightened from the ecclesiastical heaven ; and new excommunications against Frederick were piled upon the old, as though it had been impossible to curse him enough. But indeed there was no weapon which was not on either side snatched at, if only it could work effectual harm to the other. Pope Gregory in a circular to the prelates and potentates of Europe solemnly denounced Frederick as the Beast rising out of the sea, and full of the names of blasphemy. But the Apocalypse was not to be interpreted all on one side ; and the Pope was proclaimed in a counter-manifesto of the Emperor's as the great Red Dragon, deceiving the whole world ; the second Balaam, speaking lies for reward ; the personal Antichrist ; the Angel from the bottomless pit. To such a white heat of fiercest mutual hate had matters arrived between these two, who according to the original idea of the kingdom and the priesthood should have been a mutual strength and support the one to the other.

So all-engrossing was the animosity between them that the frightful inroad of the Mongol hordes, whose triumph would have been fatal alike to both, could do nothing to allay or even to suspend it. These Mongols, having wasted the better part of Asia, having conquered China and Hindostan (1206–1227), had now burst upon Eastern Europe, inflicting upon it all of worst which the Hungarians had inflicted three centuries before ; but neither Pope nor Cæsar could lend the slightest help to the noble leader who with his scanty host stood in the breach and died there ; and who, vanquished though he seemed, did yet at Liegnitz (April 9, 1241) set bounds to the further advance of this hideous chivalry ;—Tartars

indeed, as men in the anguish of their fear proclaimed, for they were the very brood of Tartarus or hell.

Whether, if Frederick had lived, he would not have found the Papacy and the Lombard League and the Mendicant Friars, which last never served the Papacy more effectually than now, too strong for him; whether, notwithstanding many partial successes, the conflict that raged in every corner of Italy and in much of Germany was not going against him, may very fairly be a question; but with his untimely death (1250),—for he had but reached his fifty-sixth year,—the Imperial or Ghibelline cause was lost. The struggle, it is true, did not end for years to come; it could not end so long as a Hohenstaufen was in life; but the issues of it were virtually determined. I cannot follow it further; only I must spare a few words for the epilogue to this long tragedy, itself in some sort more tragic than all which had gone before.

Assuredly Rome could not boast that she scorned to war with the dead. She pursued with inextinguishable hatred all of that detested Suabian House. Frederick left several children, legitimate and illegitimate, behind him. But a weird was upon him and upon his race. An evil destiny pursues them; they perish one by one, and by strange dooms;—until, last male scion of that Imperial strain, comes

‘wandering by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood.’

It is the young and beautiful Conradin, grandson of Frederick, least guilty—humanly speaking, the one unguilty of a guilty race;—who yet, as so often happens, gathers up in himself all the curse and the punishment that was due to all, and, paying the things that he never took, attests how impossible it is to dissociate the



members of a family from each other. He was safe in Germany under a mother's wing, but, boy as he was, would fain win back the kingdom of the Sicilies, which by right of inheritance he claimed as his own. Defeated in this attempt by Charles of Anjou, whom in a disastrous hour for Italy Pope Clement IV. had invited to take that kingdom in possession, Conradin stoops his neck to the headsman's axe at Naples (1268).

And now the end has come: one sun in the firmament, as Dante deplores, has been put out by the other; the Hohenstaufens have perished from the face of the earth; and the Papacy issues forth visibly triumphant from this long and terrible struggle—not unscarred, yet never greater, or indeed never so great as now. It has encountered the one power which could pretend to dispute with it the dominion of the world, and has overcome it. 'With Frederick fell the Empire. From the ruin which overwhelmed the greatest of its Houses it emerged, living indeed and destined to a long life; but so shattered, crippled, and degraded that it could never more be to Europe or to Germany what it once had been' (Bryce). What is known as the Long Interregnum succeeded,—three and twenty years of frightful anarchy; until Rodolph of Hapsburg, at length chosen Emperor (1273), brought some sort of order into Germany again. But now the armed pilgrimage to Rome for the obtaining a coronation at the Papal hands fell so far out of use that more than sixty years elapsed before Henry of Luxemburg attempted to renew it; and his brief career, so big with unfulfilled promise, being ended (1313), a new interregnum left the Italians ample leisure to dissolve whatever ties still attached them to Germany. Meanwhile the French kings, conscious of the growing power of France, where all was knitting together into a compact military mon-

archy, while in Germany all bands that should bind together were loosening and dissolving, took up the policy of resistance to Papal pretensions, which had dropped from German hands. The grander features of the conflict do not produce themselves again; but when we reach the times of Boniface VIII. there will be occasion to speak of the immense consequences which from this resulted. It will then perhaps be seen how 'the art, the policy, the tyranny of France from this period inflicted deeper wounds upon the dignity and authority of the Papal See than the haughty hostility of the Hohenstaufens' (Bryce).

## LECTURE XIII.

*THE EUCHARISTIC CONTROVERSIES OF THE  
MIDDLE AGES.*

It was very graciously ordered by Him who orders all things for the good of his Church, that the leading outlines of its teaching should, in almost all main particulars, have been traced and authoritatively fixed before that general break-up overtook the Western world, of which the invasion by the German tribes was the immediate cause. It thus came to pass that the faithful, notwithstanding the darkness and ignorance of the ages which followed, found themselves in conscious possession of precious results which, with the scantier helps at their own command, they could never have wrought out for themselves. Things which would have been too high for them had not been too high for the well-trained and accomplished theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries; and upon the labours of these the Church of the next centuries thankfully entered. Nor can there be any more signal evidence of the completeness with which the Church of the Fathers had done, and not for itself only, the work of defining the truth which it held, had drawn accurate lines of demarcation for the separating of this truth from the errors upon either side which it denied, than this, namely the fewness of the struggles involving questions of doctrine which agitate the Middle Ages. Whatever the early Church had settled, it was

very rarely that any endeavour was made, or any desire shown, to disturb the settlement. There was a feeble effort at the close of the eighth century, on the part of some in Spain, Adoptionists they were called, to revive, though with a difference, the Nestorian heresy; but this excepted, which was put down at the Council of Frankfort (794), there was no attempt, and perhaps no intentional one here, to recede from the decisions of the Four Great Councils as touching those cardinal truths of the Christian faith on which they had definitively pronounced. Gottschalk's baffled endeavour to bring back in all its rigour Augustine's teaching on the matter of Predestination cannot be adduced as another exception, for that was no effort to depart from the teaching of the earlier Church, but to adhere to it more closely. Full of speculative activity as the men of those ages were, the questions which stirred them belonged to their own times, and were not those of an earlier period brought anew into debate. Such were regarded as having received a settlement not to be disturbed any more.

But strangely, and, as it proved, most unfortunately, there had been one notable exception. The doctrine of the manner of Christ's Presence in the Holy Eucharist, of the relation in which the consecrated elements and the Body and Blood of Christ stand to one another, had never come into serious and deliberate debate during those times, and thus had never been the subject of authoritative definition. Men had been content with the blessing, and had not cared to define it. The leading Doctors of the Church, it is true, had almost all uttered themselves upon it; this, however, by the way, and not under the special responsibilities which make themselves so solemnly felt, when some actually existing error needs to be condemned; nor with that careful weighing of every

word which finds its place, when some precious but imperilled truth demands to be affirmed, and the frontier lines to be traced which shall divide this truth from the error that would fain encroach on its domain, or usurp its room. That Christ was really present in the Sacrament, that in that sacred feast He fed the faithful with the precious food of his own most blessed Body and Blood, in this all the Fathers of the early Church were agreed. But, starting from this and always remaining true to this, they expressed themselves further with a grand and careless boldness : as those upon whom no heresy, watching to make its gain of any random word, had imposed necessities of caution ; as those, too, who did not feel that the most rapturous expressions would be too rapturous for a worthy magnifying of that central mystery of the faith, and the gift in it made ours.

But matters could not always continue in this state. It was inevitable that sooner or later the Church would have to pronounce what it meant by this Presence, which evidently might mean so much or so little. When men once began to give an account to themselves of this, how near, on one side, lay the peril of refining that Presence away into mere words which, seeming to mean something, yet in fact meant nothing, or assuredly nothing that had any right to so august a name. How near, on the other side, was the danger of a degeneration into a coarse materialism, the supersensual truth which that word embodied being drawn down from its spiritual heights, adapted to the meanest capacity and the least spiritual mind, with all the true mystery gone from it. How certain it was that sooner or later extravagances on this side or on that, if not on both, would need to be repressed and condemned. And so it proved.

Paschasius Radbert (b. 786, d. 865 ; but both these

dates are doubtful), a learned monk, well skilled in all the theological lore of his age, put forth his world-famous treatise *On the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ*, with which the conflict may be said to have begun, in 831. It was the first regular and comprehensive treatise on the Holy Eucharist which had ever appeared, at all events the first of which any notice has reached us. Thirteen years later, and having in the mean time recast the book in a more popular form, he issued it again. Coming as it did now from one who occupied a foremost position in the Church of France—he was Abbot of New Corbey, which had left the Old Corbey in Germany very far behind it in importance—it attracted the attention which at first had been denied it. There is nothing wonderful in this. It fell in with many tendencies of the age, with the direction of popular thought and feeling which was more and more craving after an outward and visible embodiment of the inward and spiritual. But more than this. It gave consistency to that which was already the floating belief of multitudes, who were delighted to find elaborated all round, and with a certain theological justification, that which hitherto they had obscurely and more or less unconsciously held; for it cannot be doubted that it was the restless eagerness of a logical age to get theology represented in the form of logic, its impatience of any principle which it could not so represent, this, and not solely that popular craving for a more visible embodiment of the unseen, which wrought for the obtaining of acceptance for the teaching of Paschasius. What he actually taught and claimed to be the Church's doctrine was this, namely that in the Holy Eucharist, by virtue of the priestly consecration and the operation of the Holy Ghost which goes along with this, the substance of bread and wine is changed into the substance of the Body

and Blood of Christ; yet so that the accidents, as they were called—in other words, the form, colour, and taste of the elements—still, for the better exercise of faith, remain. The word ‘transubstantiation’ does not appear in the book, indeed does not anywhere appear till a much later date; but all which the word implies is here. The outspokenness of the book was a real power. Many had taught before that Christ feeds the faithful with his own Body and Blood, but their words had been more or less open to a figurative interpretation,—had not at any rate absolutely excluded this. He was resolved that, if he could help it, there should henceforward be no mistake in the matter.

The immense embarrassments which ensued so soon as ever, virtually or formally, such was accepted as the Church’s teaching; the enormous difficulty of weaving this into one coherent and consistent whole with other accepted articles of the faith, of dealing with all the consequences which it involved and which on it must follow; and the infinite ingenuity which has been expended in attempts of the kind; all these are matters sufficiently familiar to theological scholars. I cannot undertake to treat of them here. Only I will observe that now it might be seen how immense a misfortune it was that the Church had not long since been compelled dogmatically to declare what she held, and what she condemned, in a matter so high and so difficult. The inevitable conflict had not been escaped; it had only been adjourned, and adjourned from favourable times, those of the great early Doctors, to other far less favourable; for assuredly it was not the ninth century which one would willingly have chosen for the coming up for discussion of a mystery so sublime.

Great as was the favour which this treatise of Pascha-

sus found with the many, there were also not a few who were offended. The theological leaders of the age were divided into opposite camps. Hincmar of Rheims (d. 882) sided with him; so also did Ratherius of Verona (b. 890, d. 974);—names such as these attesting the strength with which the spirit of the age was setting in this direction. But on the other side was Rabanus Maurus (d. 856), a scholar of Alcuin, and perhaps the most distinguished theologian of his time, and generally the Carolingian Divines. Better known to us now, at least by name, is Ratramn (d. 868); Bertram he was often called in the Reformation times, and is sometimes still, but by mistake;—his book, which has a literary interest no less than a theological, being sometimes ascribed to a greater than he, even to Scotus Erigena, who, as there is reason to suppose, did write against Paschasius, though his work has not reached us. These, and others with them, denounced his teaching on the Eucharist as novel and erroneous. It was for them a violent outrage upon the intellect, a reduction of that which is in the highest sense spiritual under the laws of the senses. But they did not always in their resistance to it observe the golden mean: they might be sometimes likened to the woodman who, in his eagerness to disengage the oak from the ivy which is strangling it, incautiously wounds the tree itself. The conditions of the struggle were, indeed, in every way unfortunate; above all unfortunate in this, namely that what Paschasius taught of error attached itself closely to what the Church had always held of truth, might only too easily be confounded with this, or mistaken for it; even as numbers to this day confound any Real Presence with Transubstantiation, and, in their zeal to get rid of the superstitious accretion, are intolerant of the truth on which this has been superinduced. It is not, as I need hardly remind



you, the verity of Christ's Presence in the Sacrament which our Church in her conflict with Rome denies ; but the rash and peremptory definition of the manner of that Presence.

In the two centuries which intervened between Paschasius Radbert and Berengar of Tours,—among the Dark Ages two of the darkest,—little or nothing was done for the scientific working out of the immense problems with the solution of which the Church had burdened herself when she adopted the teaching of Paschasius for her own. In using this language I do not imply that there had been as yet any authoritative allowance of his teaching, or condemnation of that which it excluded ; for there had been no formal Church utterance one way or the other on the subject ; but only that such as would not receive it were growing to be more and more regarded in the judgment of the many as of questionable rightness of faith ; the popular sentiment which anticipated, and at the same time prepared the way for, ultimate dogmatic definition, pronouncing itself ever more strongly against them. But they were not to be silenced without one struggle, one vigorous protest more. When indeed this was made, it did not fail to exemplify the danger which was most to fear. The Charybdis of Transubstantiation was effectually avoided ; but in efforts to keep clear of this it was often forgotten that there was a Scylla of mere spiritualism on the other side.

From Berengar (born about 1000, and called of Tours to distinguish him from others of the same name), the protest came. Following in the footsteps of Ratramn, but with clearer insight into what he was doing and a more definite purpose, and probably under the spell of a more ruling spirit, that namely of Scotus Erigena,—he renewed the opposition to Paschasius which had well-nigh

died out. But, while rejecting the gross carnal error of Paschasius, he rejected with it, so it appears to me, a portion of the truth on which that error had fastened itself; the true doctrine of the Eucharist meanwhile retreating out of sight, as the woman in the Apocalypse into the wilderness (Rev. xii. 6), there to tarry until better times came round. A letter of Berengar to Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury that should be, and at that time Prior of Bec in Normandy,—a letter which there may fairly be a question whether Lanfranc was justified in allowing others to make use of,—first brought him into trouble. His teaching upon this point was condemned by Pope Leo IX. in a Council at Rome (1050); again in the same year at Vercelli. ‘Would God,’ exclaims Luther, ‘that all Popes had borne themselves so christianly in all things as this Pope in the matters of Berengar,’—his hatred of sacramentaries proving for the moment stronger than his hatred of Popes.

Berengar, though condemned, had many powerful friends; these, however, by no means all or nearly all agreeing with him. Among them was no less a man than Hildebrand, at this time Cardinal Legate in France, and the coming Pope. Having succeeded in persuading Hildebrand of the soundness of his faith,—for Berengar was prepared to sign a declaration, ‘The bread and wine of the altar after consecration are the Body and Blood of Christ,’—he ventured to appear before a new Synod at Rome, where it was arranged that he should openly clear himself (1059). But, as will often happen where a public assembly has to be reckoned with, matters did not at that Synod take their course according to the programme designed. As many as counted Berengar a heretic, and a shiftily one, were resolved there should be no mistake, no evasion for him under shelter of equivocal

statements ; and there was put before him for his acceptance quite another palinode, with no vague generalities or convenient creepholes. This, not for a moment believing it (he himself tells us as much), but overborne by multitudes, and in the fear of immediate death, he sought to modify, and, when this might not be, he signed. No sooner, however, had he put the Alps between himself and his enemies than he recanted his recantation, gave vent to his anger against himself in charges against all who had any share in his humiliation, while he openly bewailed the weakness out of which he had set his hand to the document forced upon him. Entangled before long in angriest controversy with Lanfranc and with others, he reaffirmed all which for the moment he had retracted ; and so filled Western Christendom with his doctrine that Hildebrand, now Pope, had no choice but, however unwillingly, to cite him to Rome, there to make answer for himself (1078).

The great Pontiff, who was an eminent Church-ruler rather than a highly trained theologian, and who had no desire that the existing freedom should be restricted by a new dogmatic definition, would fain have helped Berengar again, and by the same means as before. Some correspondence, only recently brought to light and published in 1850, reveals how much had passed by letter between them on the subject. Obtaining from Berengar a new and somewhat more explicit confession of faith, Gregory avouched himself at an assembly of Bishops satisfied with it, and would fain have had others satisfied as well. But they were *not* satisfied, and made him clearly to understand that they were not. And now Gregory, who on occasion could set his face as a flint, evidently did not consider that such an occasion was here. Prepared to go far, he yet was not prepared to go all lengths,

in Berengar's behalf. He had another mightier work and one far nearer to his heart in hand ; nothing less than the complete elevation of the spiritual above the temporal, of the successor of St. Peter above the successor of Cæsar. For the putting through of this mighty undertaking it was absolutely necessary that his own orthodoxy should be above the breath of suspicion. None must be able to cast in his teeth with any semblance of truth that he was a fautor of heretics. But his enemies—and that mortal strife with the Emperor in which he was engaged gave him many enemies—were already making use of the evident favour with which he regarded the heretic already twice condemned ; and when Berengar was rash enough to appeal to the Pope as in a certain sympathy with himself on the matter in dispute, Gregory at once threw him over, demanding of him instant subscription to the form of recantation from which he shrank the most. It was again to be shown that Berengar had not what we have lately learned to call ' the courage of his opinions.' After a faint struggle and endeavour to modify the document in his own direction, he signed ; willing, as he afterwards avowed, to commit himself to the mercy of God rather than to theirs into whose hands, as an obstinate and relapsed heretic, he would otherwise have fallen. Deeply wounded in conscience, feeling that he had secured his safety at the cost of his Christian honour, likening himself to Aaron and to Peter,—they also both of them unfaithful to God through the fear of men,—he spent the long years which yet remained to him (for he did not die till 1088), in retirement ; and owing to the potent protection of Gregory that, despite of a third retraction, he was not molested any further.

A word or two more concerning the man and his teaching. And first concerning the man. Who is there

that would not fain adopt, if he might, Coleridge's judgment of Berengar, so glorious in its charity? Who is there that is not disposed to feel and think somewhat worse of himself, when he is unable to make this judgment his own? And yet such is my condition. I have no choice but to say that, as it seems to me, there has been a disposition to overrate Berengar, and this both intellectually and morally. An adroit dialectician, when such were rarer than half a century later they became, a scholar of very various accomplishments, gifted with a singular power of drawing and attaching friends, he was from the beginning restless and vain, ill content to walk in old paths, eager to make a figure in the world, and in the end making one only too notable. Incapable he plainly was of taking the true measure of himself, for else he would not have twice challenged dangers from which at the decisive moment he shrank. Incapable he also showed himself of taking the true measure of others. When one considers what was the relative mental calibre of Lanfranc and of Berengar, the insolent tone of superiority in which Berengar addresses the Italian scholar and theologian, and this before any personal antagonism had sprung up between them, can only, as one reads, fill with a painful astonishment.

Then too there is a passionate feebleness about him. He scolds like an angry woman. A much smaller man than Abélard, who will presently appear on the scene, he shares with him in a very unpleasant trait, namely that he cannot conceive of any opposing or even disagreeing with him, except as impelled to this by ignorance, or dishonesty, or personal malice. His adversaries are 'savage wild beasts;' a Bishop of Padua, who was not on his side, is 'the Paduan buffoon;' another is 'the Pisan Antichrist.' If he has to speak of Pope Leo,

‘that holy lion of yours,’ he takes the occasion of observing, ‘is very far from being the Lion of the tribe of Judah.’ As the conflict deepens, he over and over again assures Lanfranc, and in every variety of language, that he lies, or, slightly varying the charge, but assuredly not making it less offensive, that he speaks against the testimony of his own conscience. Certainly his own writings leave an impression about him as of one singularly wanting in self-command, with little sense of personal dignity, grievously deficient in that unfailing mark of true nobleness, the power of doing justice to a foe.

So much for the man. But his doctrine, was it a timely protest against errors and exaggerations of Paschasius which the Church had adopted and virtually made her own? or was there danger from his teaching lest both should go, the error and the truth,—lest with that which it would be gain to lose, there should be also lost that whose loss would have been irreparable? As I have said already, it seems to me the last, and that his success would have been a calamity. No doubt the truth of the Sacrament was in his time dangerously overlaid, but it was not lost; and all experience has shown that in these matters it is far easier to take from the too much than to add to the too little. Superstition sometimes guards the truth which it distorts, caricatures, and in part conceals. Putting all things together, I am unable to share in the sympathy with which this revolt of his against the prevailing dogma of his time has often been regarded. It presents itself to me in the light of a feeble and ill-concerted insurrection, which so mixed up objects desirable and undesirable, that those who could wish its success for some reasons could only deprecate and dread this success for others; an insurrection which, being presently put down, had for its only consequence the fastening of the

yoke more firmly than ever upon their necks in whose behalf and for whose deliverance it had originally been planned. At the same time it is not easy to affirm what the doctrinal results of a triumph on his part would have been; neither does an increased acquaintance with his own writings diminish the difficulty. Since Lessing's discovery, something more than a century ago, in the library at Wolfenbüttel, of Berengar's latest answer to Lanfranc, and its publication in 1834 by Neander, we are no longer compelled to derive from others, and those generally adversaries or ill-willers, our knowledge of what his doctrine was; as to a considerable extent was the case before. But the difficulty remains. There are statements of his which satisfy all just demands; but then again there are others in which he seems 'to hedge,' and which would leave the words of Consecration a trope, and the Sacrament itself little more than a commemorative meal. There will be always, I think, a difference of opinion as to which are the truer voice of the man.

A few words before we leave this theme. It is certainly a thought of infinite sadness that this Sacrament,—the very bond of innermost communion of the faithful with their Lord, and through Him with one another,—should have thus proved so often, and, in times which this course of Lectures does not reach will be found to prove still more, a source and spring of strife and debate, dividing Churches, and then dividing again the divided. And yet from the bitter of this thought a sweet may be extracted. There is comfort even here. How priceless it and its benefits must have been felt to be, before men would contend for it as they have done, counting it as the very apple of their eye, so that he who wounded them here wounded them in a part at once the ten-

derest and the most vital ; willing to set all upon the hazard, to taste all bitternesses, in exiles, in prisons, on scaffolds, at the fiery stake, for what they felt to be the truth of God in this matter. And no wonder. In the Sacraments, above all in this Sacrament, is the great abiding witness in the Church, a witness not in word only but also in act, against all merely rationalistic explanations of our relation to Christ and his to us. We are herein and hereby brought into real and direct contact with the whole Christ, and He with us ; translated out of a spiritualistic world of shadows into a true kingdom of realities.

And another comforting thought may abate the sadness with which we contemplate the endless differences with which men have learned to regard this holiest mystery of all. No doubt there can be but one truth about it, and all which departs from this is wrong. But those who miss this absolute truth, we are sometimes tempted to think of them as missing the blessing of that which they underrate, or—I will not say overrate, for that is impossible—which they wrongly rate. Let us be reassured. God is greater than our hearts. Many a one who, under imperfect teaching, has come to this as no more than a commemorative rite with some vague ill-defined solemnity clinging to it, has gone away strengthened and inwardly nourished, as he only shall fully know and understand in that day when Christ shall quicken to life and immortality the mortal bodies of his saints. God's purposes of grace are not so lightly defeated, the ordinances which He has appointed are not so easily robbed of their blessing, as we too often assume. Let us devoutly thank Him that the condition of receiving the grace of this heavenly feast does not lie in holding what Paschasius Radbert held about it, or in denying what



Paschasius Radbert held about it; in being a Berengarian, or in being an anti-Berengarian. There are things which may be too high for us, too high for our understanding, but not too high for our using and enjoying; and of such things this is one, and the greatest.

## LECTURE XIV.

*THE EARLIER SCHOOLMEN.*

THE passion for the Crusades and for the Scholastic Theology may be regarded severally as the outer and inner expression of one and the same movement in the heart and mind of Western Christendom. As by the Crusades men avouched that they would no longer be satisfied merely to hear of that land which the Son of God had hallowed by his presence, by his life, and by his death, but must have the very land itself in possession, not walking any more in this matter merely by faith when it was free to them to walk also by sight, so fared it after a little in another region as well. There were as adventurous spirits, as chivalrous hearts, in the cloister as in the camp. These too will not be content until they have grasped—not by faith only, but with every faculty of their being, and therefore intellectually no less than morally and spiritually,—that entire body of truth taught by Christ and by his Church. What they have taken upon trust, upon the Church's word, they avouch that they have so taken in the fullest assurance that it would justify itself to the reason as well. And that it could so justify itself throughout, that the *auctoritates* and the *rationes*, as severally they were called, were in perfect harmony with each other, the Schoolmen made it their task and business to show.

But the Schoolmen,—what exactly do we mean when

we speak of these? who were they? what did they propose to themselves? were they men worthy of praise or blame, of admiration or contempt? The name, which oftentimes implies and reveals so much, does not materially assist us here. A *scholasticus* in medieval Latin might be a teacher, or he might be a learner; all which the word affirms is that he has something to do with schools. We must then look further for an explanation of what the Schoolmen were, and what they intended. Persons, some will reply, who occupied themselves with questions like this, How many angels could dance at the same instant upon the point of a needle? or with others of the same character. Totally uninformed of the conditions, moral and intellectual, of Western Christendom which gave birth to these Schoolmen, and which at the time left room for no other birth, never having read a line of their writings, they have no hesitation in passing their judgment of contempt upon them. Thus, if Albert the Great is named;—Albertus Magnus as he is more commonly called (b. 1193, d. 1280),—their ignorance about him may be complete; they may never so much as have seen the outsides of the twenty-one huge folio volumes which contain his works; but they will not let him pass without an observation of gratuitous contempt, to the effect that there was nothing great about him but his name.

This contempt, it is worth remarking, is very far from being shared by the more illustrious thinkers of the modern world,—not, for example, by Hegel, or Alexander Von Humboldt; the latter characterizing the disquisitions of this same unfortunate Albertus on the subjects with which he, Humboldt, was chiefly conversant, as ‘admirable beyond expression, for the period in which he lived;’ while Von Raumer declares, under like reservations, that

‘he might be called the Aristotle or Leibnitz of his age.’ ‘To the Schoolmen,’ says Sir William Hamilton, ‘the vulgar languages are principally indebted for what precision and analytic subtlety they possess.’ And only a few years ago one lost too early to the English Church, wrote as follows:—‘Through two eventful centuries, which witnessed, as they passed, the formation of nationalities, the establishment of representative government, the birth of vernacular literature, and the grand climacteric of ecclesiastical power, the philosophy of the Schools held on its way, not only commanding with an undisputed sway the intellect of those restless times, but elaborating its system, extending its influence, and drawing into its service some of the highest minds that the Christian world has produced. For two centuries longer, though spent in vital energy, it continued to rule on, till with the fifteenth century came the resistless onslaught, which with the revival of classical letters broke for ever the spell of its dominion’ (Shirley).

To these names that of Coleridge must be added. I cannot remember that he has expressed himself on the subject anywhere in his writings; but once, when as a young man I made with Arthur Hallam a pilgrimage to Highgate to have the privilege of hearing Coleridge talk, we were rewarded by a discourse, which must have lasted for nearly an unbroken hour, on the intellectual greatness of the Schoolmen. The revived interest in patristic literature which was so marked a feature of that time suggested his special theme, which was this, namely, the much larger the amount of profit that might even now be gotten from the Schoolmen than from the Fathers, whose frequent ‘nugacity,’ for I am afraid he used that word, he denounced. The manner in which Aquinas had met as by anticipation nearly all the later

assaults on the miracles, and the greatness of the speculative genius of our English Occam, with the perilous lines on which his speculation was travelling at the last, were the special subjects of his discourse, or at all events are those which, after the lapse of so many years, still survive the most clearly in my memory.

Let me seek to explain to you, so far as I myself understand, how this Theology arose; what the objects were which it proposed to itself; and how far it can be said to have accomplished these objects. When in the eleventh century the reviving activity of thought, the fresh life which was everywhere stirring, sought some material on which it might exercise itself, this, with the exception of such as theology and the Church supplied, was nowhere to be found. All other sciences in the troubles and tumults of the centuries preceding had either wholly perished, or had been reduced to the barest and most meagre elements. The classical treasures of antiquity, though not all or nearly all irrecoverably gone, were mostly hidden out of sight for the time. Papal Canons, decrees of Councils, treatises of the Fathers and such like, were apparently all which had survived the mighty wreck. In these, and in these only, was to be found nourishment for the mental craving of the age. If any new intellectual edifice was to be reared by aid of materials which the past supplied, here and here only were those materials to be obtained.

But whatever edifice was reared, it must conform to certain conditions. Thus, there was no general desire at this time to overpass the limits of thought and speculation which the Church imposed. These were felt to be, and, as compared to what any free-thinking in that age was likely to prove, they were, blessed restraints. Whatever intellectual revolt against the Roman system might be

covertly brooding in other hearts, there was none such among the builders here. With a very few exceptions they wrought in the interests of Rome ; always intended to be, and for a long time were, her most devoted and her ablest champions.

Here then were the causes and conditions of the rise of this Scholastic Theology:—In the first place a great mental activity ; a young world, conscious of its powers, and eager to exert them ; as Bacon has it, ‘sharp and strong wits and abundance of leisure ;’ but, as he adds, ‘small variety of reading.’ For indeed this was the second condition, the absence, namely, of any material on which to exercise a shaping, moulding power, save such as the Church furnished ;—no classical literature, no independent ethics, no natural philosophy ; a comparatively narrow basis which compelled men to build high rather than broad. Fuller expresses this well : ‘As such who live in London and like populous places, having but little ground for their foundations to build houses on, may be said to enlarge the breadth of their houses in height (I mean increasing their room in many storeys one above another) ; so the Schoolmen in this age, lacking the latitude of general learning and languages, thought to enlarge their active minds by mounting up ; so improving their small bottom with towering speculations, though some of things mystical that might not—more of things difficult that could not—most of things curious that need not—be known unto us.’ ‘Their wits,’ to come back to the words of Lord Bacon, ‘being shut up in the cells of a few authors, chiefly Aristotle their dictator, as their persons were shut up in the cells of monasteries and colleges, and knowing little history either of nature or time, they did out of no great quantity of matter and infinite agitation of wit spin out to us those laborious webs of

learning which are extant in their books.' And thirdly, there was the desire to put forth these activities only within such limits and under such restraints as the Church laid down, without the calling in question, or even the evading, of any dogma or decision of hers. It was the 'how' and the 'why,' never the 'what,' of the Church's teaching which the Schoolmen undertook to discuss. *Doctores* they claimed to be, not *Patres*; not, as fathers, productive; not professing to bring out of their treasure things new, but only to justify and establish things old.

Under limitations such as these, there was one immense work which was possible for the human intellect. It might organize the vast, often unshapely, mass of materials which lay before it into one symmetrical whole; adjust the relations of the several parts to one another; reconcile, or put in the way of reconciliation, apparent or, as they sometimes were, real contradictions; it might, in short, systematize theology. This was a task still waiting to be done. The more illustrious teachers in earlier periods had found each his own special and peculiar work to perform, his own position to make good. Occupied with this, they had not found the inclination nor the leisure for a deliberate oversight of the whole field of theology; they had not mapped it out as it demanded to be mapped out. It was to this that the Schoolmen addressed themselves,—to the organizing after a true scientific method of the rude undigested mass which lay before them.

But more than this they took in hand. The arranging and marshalling in their due order of the enormous amount of materials which the Medieval Church had inherited or acquired, adjusting parts and proportions,

bringing in the end complete *Sums of Theology* to pass,—this was neither all, nor nearly all, which these new champions of the faith undertook as a task worthy of their highest powers. Patient industry could have accomplished this ; their aims were loftier and more ambitious, and, I may add, nobler. What the Schoolmen set before themselves was nothing short of an attempt to justify to reason whatever had first been received by faith. Observe, they did not say, We will only believe that which we have first understood. Such shallow rationalism would at once have put them in conflict with the Church and with Scripture. But what they did say was this : The truths which we receive by faith can never be unreasonable. They may be, they often no doubt will be, beyond and above our reason ; they can never *really* be contrary to it ; and it cannot be displeasing to God, who has given us these reasoning faculties, that we reverently seek to apprehend not merely *what* He has done, for that is the object of faith, but *why* He has done it,—in the search of which last reason must serve as our guide.

This reconciliation of faith and reason by the giving of its due rights to each, this inauguration of a supernatural rationalism in the Church, was certainly a glorious undertaking ; I speak of it in its ideal perfection, and not as, in the giving to it of shape and body, it was more or less marred by their faults who took this task in hand. Such a reconciliation was not indeed then and by these Schoolmen for the first time attempted. The effecting of it, so far as it is capable of being effected, has always been recognized as a principal office of theology, and its most glorious prerogative. But the Schoolmen set the attaining of this object before them with a clearer consciousness of what they were doing, and strove to carry it out through the whole region of Christian dogma in a more



systematic way, than any before them had done. Nor did these spiritual freemasons remit their efforts until there had risen up under their hands structures as marvellous in an architectonic completeness and a finished elaboration of their minutest details, as the magnificent domes and cathedrals which at the self-same time were everywhere covering the face of northern Europe, and filling the hearts of men with wonder at shapes of grace, beauty and power such as none had dreamt of before.

There was, it is true, a fault and flaw cleaving from the first to the work which they had thus undertaken. It was a fault which never left it ;—which planted in it germs of dissolution and decay, such as, in due time unfolded, were to prove fatal to it in the end. The fault was this, namely, that the medieval Schoolmen started with the assumption that all which the Church in their own day held and taught, all the accretions and additions to the pure faith of Christ which in successive ages had attached themselves to it, formed a part of the original truth once delivered, or had become no less sacred than that was, and were as such to be justified and defended. The Knights Errant of the medieval theology, they were prepared to hold the lists against all comers ; claiming for that vast complex of doctrine and discipline to which the Church more or less was committed, that it was in every detail defensible, and avouching themselves ready to defend it. They too, like the Crusaders, failed to conquer and to hold for ever as their own that Promised Land which they set forth to win ; but their toil was not therefore, any more than that of the Crusaders, without its enduring gain.

St. Anselm (b. 1033, d. 1109) is generally regarded as father and founder of the Scholastic Theology in the West ; and rightly, so far as this title can be ascribed to

any single man. But even he was not without fore-runners. Thus, not to speak of Augustine, a forerunner in every great and fruitful movement of the after ages, there was a very wonderful and mysterious apparition in the ninth century of a profound and original thinker, John Scotus Erigena; whose very name, not to speak of so much else about him, is an unsolved riddle; and whose writings on their better side,—for there was a worse and pantheistic,—anticipated much of what was most characteristic in the Schoolmen. This they too often did without the qualifications and without the guards, which those for the most part did not lose sight of. If, as he taught in as many words, philosophy was theoretic religion, and religion practical philosophy, it is difficult to see where any place or room for revelation could be found. Lanfranc too, Anselm's own teacher and his predecessor in the See of Canterbury, had used the same dialectic weapons; but what Lanfranc did reluctantly, driven to the use of these weapons by Berengar's employment of them (see p. 192), Anselm did of free choice, and fully conscious of the significance of the step he was taking. I have referred already, but very briefly, to his conflict with our Norman kings, William Rufus and Henry I., in the matter of the Investitures; but it is as a theologian that we speak of him now. 'The Augustine of the Middle Ages' Anselm has been sometimes called; and hardly any name of honour would be too honourable for him; nor is this one without its special fitness; for in him, as in Augustine, there met an eminent dialectic dexterity and subtilty of intellect, with the profoundest humility, the most ardent piety, and the most absolute affiance on the merits and righteousness of Christ.

'I believe, that so I may understand' (*Credo ut intelligam*), this was his favourite motto, even as he loved to

fall back on the words of Isaiah, 'Except ye believe, ye shall not be established;' on which Augustine also had so much loved to dwell. Nor did he reckon that this seeking to harmonize the two, faith, namely, and reason, was merely permissible to us; he counted that it could not be left unattempted without sin. Thus in one place he says, 'As the right order demands that we believe the deep things of the Christian faith before we presume to discuss them by reason, so it appears to me a piece of negligence if, after we are confirmed in the faith, we do not endeavour also to understand what we believe.' A very significant token of a new theological era beginning is a little work of his, in which all is characteristic, but the name it bears the most characteristic of all. It is called '*Cur Deus Homo?*' being a rationale of the Incarnation. This ever-memorable treatise, so small in bulk, has yet affected all after speculation of the Church in the matter of the Atonement as no other book has done. Anselm in this does not stop short, as hitherto the positive theology had stopt, with teaching that in some way or other Christ's death was substitutive and accepted in the room of ours, but goes on to seek the reason of the fact, the inner moral necessity that, if our sins were to be forgiven, the Son of God needed to take our nature and die our death; and to show that He having so done, the forgiveness followed as a necessary consequence. The fact of the worth of Christ's sacrifice every faithful member of the Church had at all times acknowledged; but what it was which made this sacrifice a 'satisfaction,' or doing enough,—as much, that is, as the clearing of the honour, the assertion of the righteousness of God required,—and how the obedience of one man overweighed the disobedience of millions, all this is here for the first time reduced to a systematic and scientific form, and cleared of

excrescences which had sometimes attached themselves to it in the earlier Church. Now first the word 'satisfaction' finds its place in the theology of the Atonement.

But the vindication of the rational character of all supernatural truth, if only the first advances are made from the right quarter, from that, namely, of faith, the position that in the end theology will be found the true philosophy, and philosophy the true theology, this has, it is evident, dangers which very closely beset it. The dialectician claimed indeed to be supplying aids to faith, to be furnishing it with additional buttresses and supports. But might it not happen sometimes that his *rationes fidei* were not forthcoming, as in the case of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity they are not? Did not the danger lie very near that the dogma which thus could not give account of itself at the bar of reason should be under suspicion, should perhaps be rejected altogether. And then too, apart from this, the whole process of vindication might resolve itself only too easily into an almost exclusively intellectual treatment of mysteries which should be first and chiefly the objects of devout affection, of adoration and prayer, and can never, without serious injury to those who occupy themselves about them, forego their character as such. Investigations safe in the hands of an Anselm, or a Bernard, how soon and how easily might they degenerate into something very different, where the true balance between the activities of the intellect and the affections of the heart was disturbed; where those were overbusy, and these called into play hardly or not at all. And then, what intruding into things not seen and which never can be seen would follow, what seeking to weigh in scales of reason that which in its nature is imponderable by them. So fared it here. Before long the simple faith of many was offended. The holiest mysteries, as it

seemed to them, were needlessly forced into debate, and in this debating profaned.

The first to call forth such remonstrances was Peter Abélard (b. 1079, d. 1142), a doctor of theology in the University of Paris ; immensely applauded there, and with all the world going after him. Probably no person of the Middle Ages has awakened so lively an interest in after times as Abélard has done ; there are few known to us so well, or who seem so much to belong to us and to the modern world. No doubt he is a very significant figure in the times to which he belongs ; but it is quite possible to rate him too highly. Vain, ‘ignorant of nothing in heaven or on earth save only of himself’ (this at least is St. Bernard’s description of him), mournfully wanting in moral earnestness—for he could endure all that applause as an instructor in things heavenly while living in deadly sin,—he owes his reputation not a little to his misfortunes, above all to the fact that in these misfortunes a woman of a far nobler type of character than his own was entangled. Something also he owes to the surprise,—a welcome surprise to many,—with which men have recognized in him not indeed a rationalist, but one with a very unmistakable vein of rationalism, a champion of ‘free enquiry’ in the ages of faith. A favourite maxim of his, ‘We must not believe what we have not first understood’ (*Non credendum nisi prius intellectum*), reveals to us how wide the gulf was that divided him from Anselm ; while his theology of the Atonement, which begins and ends with the benevolence of God, is in the same direct opposition.

Silenced, and condemned to cast into the flames with his own hand the book of his which had offended the most, he became before very long the rallying point once more for all the more advanced spirits of the age. The

offending book, slightly altered, reappeared; and at length St. Bernard counted that he could not keep silence any longer. It was not as an enemy to enquiry, or as one denying that it was man's privilege and prerogative to know the things of God, that he thus entered the lists. What was mainly now in dispute was *the way* of this divine knowledge; whether man by searching could find out God; or whether any true knowledge of Him was not rather *given* to holy and humble men of heart, the violence of prayer being the only violence which profited here; while others were more blinded than illuminated by the light toward which they presumptuously soared.

The Church in again condemning Abélard,—for at the Council of Sens it did condemn him (1140), and adjudged to a cloistral seclusion which should endure to his life's end,—had no intention of condemning thereby the Scholastic Theology itself. This, so long as it kept within its own limits, and in the main it showed no desire to transgress them, was capable of doing to the Church service too essential to allow that it should be alienated or repelled. The extent to which this Theology had taken possession of all Western Europe, and everywhere pervaded the thoughts of men, is strikingly illustrated by the fact that there is almost no important nationality of those times which cannot boast some famous Schoolman of its own. Thus Abélard was a Breton, we may say therefore a Frenchman; Albertus Magnus a German, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura Italians, Alexander Hales and William of Occam Englishmen, John Scotus Erigena and Duns Scotus Celts. There are occasions, and we have just had such a one, when to keep in mind the nationalities of these men will be helpful for the better understanding of them and their teaching.

I must hasten to the end. The two tendencies, the

scholastic and the mystic, which had been in implicit harmony in Anselm, which had come to explicit opposition in St. Bernard and Abélard, arrived before long at a thorough reconciliation, completing not excluding one another, in the illustrious school of theologians who are named from the monastery of St. Victor, near Paris, of whom Hugh (b. 1097, d. 1141), who would have been a fitter match for Abélard than St. Bernard was, and Richard (d. 1173), are the chief. Those scholastic Mystics of the twelfth century, it may be well to state in parting, must not be confounded with another band of German Mystics who appeared in the fourteenth, and of whose merits and deficiencies something must be said by and bye. The mystic Scholastics of whom we are treating now, felt, as has been well said, 'the influences of the time in which they lived, so that, while by their writings and teachings they helped to check the excessive subtlety and speculation of the period, by keeping in view the more practical and contemplative aspects of Christianity, they were themselves preserved from that degenerate mysticism which ends in a vague and feeble Pantheism, because it neglects the scientific aspects of religion, and decries all creed-statements.' The later developments of the Scholastic Theology—or Philosophy shall we call it?—which are so closely bound up with the fortunes of the Mendicant Orders that we have no choice but to consider the two together, I reserve for another Lecture.

## LECTURE XV.

*THE SECTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.*

I URGED in my opening Lecture that he who would read the story of the Church aright, for better and not for worse, should, as far as might be, read it as a story of the Wheat, and not of the Tares. And as with him who reads, so also should it fare with him who tells. Yet this after all can only very partially be done; for indeed there are tares everywhere; and that field of the Lord, toward which in this study our eyes are necessarily directed, abounding as it does with the best and with the worst, will inevitably be the very spot where the tares are to be found in rankest luxuriance; and not until the consummation of the present Age shall these, with everything else that offends, be cast out from it. But if all this be so, that would assuredly be a very one-sided, and thus a very untruthful, representation of things, which should take no account of the tares, should strive to conceal their existence or extenuate the multitude of them. My Lecture to-day will have to do with the tares.

The attempt to give in a brief compass any intelligible account of the *sects* of the Middle Ages is one beset with difficulties which might well-nigh drive the most confident in his own knowledge, and in his power of using this knowledge, to despair. In the first place, if we except the Waldenses, whom I shall not include in this Lecture, —for they deserve better than to find themselves mixed



up with such very questionable company,—we know them almost wholly by the report of their adversaries, their memorial of themselves having for the most part perished with them. But these adversaries had cause and motive enough to distort the teaching, and to blacken the character of those whom they did not count worthy, whom often they had not suffered, to live. I do not mean that it is impossible to arrive at a knowledge, accurate in the main, of what the various sectaries really held, and what was erroneously or malignantly imputed to them ; but not a little care and caution and discernment are necessary here. Then too, while we watch in a spirit of generous fairness to do them right, there are also temptations to do them more than right ; above all, in a just indignation at much which Rome was doing and teaching in these ages, we are tempted to make mere antagonism to her to cover a multitude of sins. There are not wanting some who are prepared to accept as true brethren in the faith any who can be shown to have been in vigorous opposition to her, as though distance from Rome was itself a pledge of nearness to the truth. What an example of this, pushed to an extreme, we have in the persistence with which some, in the face of evidence the most overwhelming, assert to this present day that the Albigenses (of whom presently) occupied the same doctrinal ground as the Waldenses, and were fighting, as were these last, the battle of scriptural religion.

Other embarrassments beset this task which I have to-day undertaken. Thus, consider the infinite confusion which reigns in the mere nomenclature of the sects ; some sects going by many names ; in each several locality known by a different one—so fares it with the Cathari ; many sects confounded under a common name,

applied ignorantly and almost at random to them,—as it fares with the Lollards. In the case of the former diversity is suggested, where there was none; in that of the latter it is kept out of sight, where it really existed. When, too, we study the names by which these various separatist bodies have called themselves, or been called by others, and ask them to give up their secret and to tell us what they mean and why they were originally imposed,—for to know the secret of a name is always to know something, is often to know everything concerning the bearer of the name,—in very many instances they absolutely refuse to reveal from whence they are, or what they signify, or indeed anything certain about themselves. Take names as frequently recurring as the following, Paulicians, Patarenes, Publicans, Picards, Beghards, Beguines, Lollards, and it would be easy to add immensely to the list, there is not one of them about whose origin there has not been some dispute.

And then, too, while truth is one, error is manifold. It is not one labyrinth in which we have patiently to discover our way, but many; each upon its own plan, and each with intricate and tortuous paths of its own. There was, indeed, one bond between all the sects—namely that the dominant Church was for them all a Church utterly apostate, having wholly let go and lost the faith, the mystical Babylon, the synagogue of Satan; and the Pope the Great Antichrist, the centre and source of all falsehood and corruption; so that, not in this Church's reformation and purification, but only in its destruction root and branch, was there hope for the future, or could room be made for the true kingdom of God. They differed from the heretics of an earlier time in that those earlier called in question some single doctrine of the Church; while these later called in question its whole

existence ; it was for them an incarnate lie. Not less did they differ herein from those whom we may fitly style the Reformers before the Reformation, of whom I hope to speak hereafter ; who did not refuse to recognize a Church, although one-deformed by manifold corruptions, and needing before everything else a reformation in its head and in its members. The writers against the sectaries were never weary of comparing them to the foxes which Samson caught and sent among the cornfields. Whatever way the faces of these might look, their tails were tied together into a common knot (Judges xv. 4). It did not fare otherwise, so men said, with the various heretical bodies which assailed the Church. Utterly discordant they might be each from the other ; looking in the most opposite directions ; thus one pantheist, another Manichæan ; but a common enmity to the Church of God was as the knot which tied all their tails together ; in this common hate was the bond of their union.

This too the majority of the sects, though not all, had in common, being indeed the same which we have already noted, pushed a little further,—namely, that they wholly ignored what we may fitly call historic Christianity. In a false spiritualism they resolved all the main facts of our belief as set forth in the Creed into allegories of the Christian life ; changed objective realities, which have the warrant of God's Word, into subjective fancies with no other warrant but such as they themselves might lend them. The Sacraments, as a matter of course, and Baptism most of all, as abiding witnesses for these facts of God as against the imaginations of men, were objects against which they warred with a special hate.

Among all the sects of the Middle Ages, very far the most important in numbers and in radical antagonism to

the Church, were the Cathari, or The Pure, as with characteristic sectarian assumption they styled themselves;—in Ketzer, a generic name applied in German to heretics of every description, the name still survives. Albigenses they were called in Languedoc; Patarenes in North Italy Good Men by themselves. Stretching through central Europe to Thrace and Bulgaria, they joined hands with the Paulicians of the East, and shared in their errors. Whether these Cathari stood in lineal historical descent from the old Manichæans, or had generated a dualistic scheme of their own, is a question hard to answer, and which has been answered in very different ways. This much, however, is certain, that in all essentials they agreed with them. They sought, like the earlier Manichæans, an explanation for the moral riddle of the world in a fundamental opposition between matter and spirit; completing this with that which has always gone with it, a rejection of the Old Testament and of the Sacraments,—a denial of any but a phantastic Crucifixion, of the resurrection of the body, and of other facts of the kingdom of God. Certain inner differences they had among themselves; but of these I cannot undertake to speak in particular: only observing that there were some who saw light and darkness, good and evil, as independent powers, and one as old as the other, contending for the possession of the world; while others, not quite so remote from the truth, saw in evil a rebel power which, originally subject, had risen up in a successful revolt against the good. Certainly it is difficult to understand the mighty attraction which these doctrines,—in part Gnostic, in larger part Manichæan, by the Church already proved and rejected, and as much opposed to sound reason as to Scripture,—exercised just at this time on the minds and hearts of so many. Very strange is the satisfaction even

for their religious instincts and cravings which not a few must have found in these doctrines, the passionate devotion with which they held them; for I suppose Baxter's estimate of the Albigenses—'Manichees with some better persons mixed'—is in the main a true one.

The Manichæan view of all matter as essentially impure, of the body as a mere sinful prison-house of the soul,—the devil, as the Cathari expressly taught, having made the one and God the other,—worked here, as it never fails to work, in two opposite directions. There were those who counted that this sinful flesh could never be punished enough,—in their excessive and extravagant asceticism denying everything to it. There were others who reckoned as a point altogether indifferent to what uses so vile a thing as this body was turned, and who thereupon proceeded to turn it to the vilest; while there wanted not others who veered from one extreme to the opposite, and who, affecting for a while to live above angels, sank presently down to a life below beasts. First attracting notice in the latter half of the eleventh century, the Cathari multiplied with extraordinary rapidity, so that in many districts they were during the next century more numerous than the Catholics. St. Bernard, who undertook a mission among them (1147), describes himself as having found the churches of the Catholics without people, and the people without priests.

As the Cathari disappear from the scene,—which they begin to do toward the close of the thirteenth century, unable to stand against the tremendous organization of Rome, and her inexorable application of the means of repression at her command,—the Beghards and Beguines, of whom we heard little or nothing before, come to the front. These at the beginning were free guilds or associations, the first of pietist men, and the second of pietist women,

who, without vows and without the Papal allowance, associated together for works of Christian beneficence. But however these might refrain from constituting themselves into societies hostile to Rome, it was not very long before others found their way among them, and sought to take possession of their name and their organization for purposes of their own—and chiefly the extreme Franciscans, known by many names, as Zealots (*Zelatores*), Little Brethren (*Fraticelli*), and Spirituals (*Spirituales*). I must here anticipate a little, for I have not spoken of St. Francis, and reserve the most which I have to say about him for my next Lecture. I content myself here with observing that, already in his lifetime, there had been attempts on the part of some of his followers to relax the extreme severity of his rule of absolute poverty; while after his death appeals were made to Rome to sanction this relaxation. That one Pope after another, Gregory IX. (1231), Innocent IV. (1245), should have favoured this appeal was not very wonderful. They must have been well pleased to abate, though ever so little, the enormous contrast between the poverty of the Orders, and the wealth, splendour, and magnificence with which they were themselves surrounded. But concessions to human weakness by them sanctioned were profoundly resented by the party of rigour in the Order of St. Francis, who saw in these concessions the abandonment of its fundamental principle, and a treason done to its founder, who for them was hardly less than a second Christ.

These remonstrants drifted by imperceptible degrees into a position of open antagonism to the Church. All the floating prophecies against the Papacy,—and the air was full of them,—they adopted and made their own. There were writings in highest esteem among many, apocalyptic visions and the like, by Joachim, Abbot of

Floris in Calabria, one for whom Dante finds room in Paradise ; wherein he had spoken plainly of the corruptions of the Church, and prophesied a new and better age which was coming. These too they appropriated, adding to them others in which no terms were kept with Rome. She was for them the Great Babylon, doomed to a speedy and utter destruction ; for the ' Everlasting Gospel ' beheld by the Seer in the Apocalypse (Rev. xiv. 6), a new and last revelation, destined to throw all that went before into the shade, was at hand. The dispensation of the Father had closed with the coming of Christ ; that of the Son was just on the point of closing ; when that of the Holy Ghost, the Everlasting Gospel, would begin ;—the faithful in the first age, the age of St. Peter, having been the servants of God ; and in the second, the age of St. Paul, the sons of God ; but presently in the third, the age of St. John, and with allusion to John xv. 15, to be the friends of God. Some attempts at reconciliation, but these unsuccessful, were made ; until at last, under John XXII., it was war, such as could only end in the destruction of one or the other, between them and the Papacy. But if they fought by aid of prophecies and apocalypses against a heretic Pope, the mystical Antichrist who was preparing the way for a still greater Antichrist, he fought against them with the scaffold, the prison, and the sword, delivering them over in heaps to the Inquisition to be burned as often as he could lay hands upon them ; and these the weapons of his warfare proved in the end the most effectual ; so that long before the end of the fourteenth century we cease to hear of these sectaries any more.

Among the most noticeable but least commendable of the medieval sects were the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, as they called themselves ; of whom and of

whose teaching there will be more to say when we come to speak of the German Mystics. These made their first appearance in and about Cologne early in the thirteenth century. They had emancipated themselves not merely from the yoke of Rome, but from the obligations of the moral law, justifying the freedom which they claimed by an appeal to words of Scripture, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty' (2 Cor. iii. 17),—words which they made to cover all their libertine doctrines and deeds. Consistent pantheists, they denied the distinction between good and evil. All was good, for God was good, and God was all and in all; as truly and as much in the sinner sinning as in the righteous man doing righteous acts; as much honoured in and by the one as the other, for He had equally willed, so far as a will could be predicated of Him, the sin and the righteousness; with all else that follows when pantheism is pushed to its legitimate and logical consequences. They reappear as Men of Understanding (*Homines Intelligentiæ*) in the fifteenth century; and we recognize in their teaching the exact counterpart to that of the Libertines who at a later day made war against Calvin at Geneva. These latter, known by this name, were indeed, as there is every reason to conclude, in unbroken line of succession from the earlier Libertines. The relation of the heresiarch Amalrich of Bena, pantheist and mystic, to these Brethren is curious and interesting, but I cannot attempt to trace it here.

It was long, as would appear, before Rome woke to a full sense of the imminence and urgency of the danger which from these various sects threatened her on every side; of the need, if she would still sit as a Queen, that she should address herself in earnest to the facing and overcoming it. There was indeed no time to lose. The North of Spain, the South of France, Lombardy, Western



Germany along the whole course of the Rhine, the Low Countries, all these regions were very hotbeds of the sects ; the cities which they haunted most being these—Lyons, Toulouse or Tolosa (that is *tota dolosa*, as a monkish chronicler interprets the name), Milan, Basle, Strasburg, Cologne, Brussels, with some others that might be named. It was a strange spectacle. While the master-builders were rearing to ever giddier heights the stupendous edifice of Papal power, an ever-increasing multitude of obscure workers, bound together, if by nothing else, yet by a common hatred, and with a common resolution not to leave one stone of that edifice on another, were seeking to undermine its very foundations. During the latter half of the twelfth century canons which were never enforced, missions of which nothing came, abortive Crusades, these all, following hard on one another, were devised against an insurrection which was indeed formidable, for it was an insurrection of the spirits of men ; but canons and missions and Crusades proved ineffectual alike. And now a long-continued impunity had so emboldened the sectaries in Southern France that they openly held at Toulouse a Council of their own (1167) ; elected a Pope (he was indeed kept out of sight, residing somewhere in remote Bulgaria) ; and transacted other ecclesiastical business. With this Pope of their own, with a sacrament of their own invention, with a zealous propaganda, with a freemasonry of mutual recognition, they may be said to have challenged the Church to a conflict, being very far from content merely to be suffered to exist.

There were inner reasons enough why the sects should about the twelfth century have pullulated with a freer and a wilder growth than in any preceding age. The vast and imposing fabric of doctrine and discipline which the medieval Church had been rearing through so many

centuries, storey rising over storey, was now completed, or nearly completed. But outside that Church were innumerable souls whose spiritual needs it wholly failed to satisfy; for whom it did not provide any spiritual food, answering to their wants. Thus take it in one of its nobler aspects, in the Philosophy of its Schools. What satisfaction was there in this for multitudes of poor and humble that were simply hungering after the bread of life? Or regard it again in one of its most shameful aspects, the insatiable greed, the covetousness transcending all measure, which, scandalous anywhere, was most scandalous in those high places where now it haunted the most. What marvel that men should loathe the ministrations of those, and they were many, who, whatever sacred names they might pretend, yet plainly showed that they worshipped Mammon as the highest god of all? To make Rome responsible for all the wild extravagances, the crimes and the madness of the sects, would be palpably unjust. There is madness enough in the hearts of men, only waiting to show itself; there is wickedness too much, only seeking excuses for its manifestation; all of which there would be no justice in laying at her door; while yet it is impossible to acquit her of having largely contributed to provoke and foment evils against which she afterwards waged war.

The first decisive token that the policy of leaving things to drift, or of applying weak palliatives, had come to an end was the letting loose against the Cathari by Pope Innocent III. of a crusading army under Simon de Montfort. You probably know, at least in outline, what followed. The whole transaction is the darkest blot on Innocent's fame: and he, who was not without his compunctious visitings, who could scarcely forget the words which St. Bernard had addressed to a predecessor of his

own, 'Assail them, but with the word, not with the sword' (*Aggredere eos, sed verbo, non ferro*), was himself doomed to discover how much easier it is to let loose human tigers, than to recal and cage them again.

The political results of this which, looked at from another point of view, was a struggle between Northern and Southern France and a complete triumph of the former, do not come directly within our sphere; but they were so vast, and have proved so enduring, that I cannot wholly pass them by. This Crusade of Simon de Montfort—if we may degrade so noble a name by applying it to so execrable an enterprise,—changed, and changed for ever, the whole aspect of the lands south of the Loire, regions which until this time could hardly be regarded as France at all. This country, under princes of its own, had developed, and was in the early part of the thirteenth century developing still further, a language, a literature, a civilization of its own. All perished, alike the good and the evil; or, where it did not perish, was thrust back into a position of abiding inferiority. Northern France had won, probably deserved to win, the day; while Languedoc,—I take the name in its largest meaning,—Provençal hitherto, with more elegance and refinement but less of moral purpose about it, with its graceful poets of love, but of a love too often degenerating into licentiousness, defeated and with its proper national life for ever broken, must itself become Frankish henceforward.

Notwithstanding the multitudes who, during the twenty years over which the Albigensian War extended (1209–1229), had perished by the sword, in the prison, at the stake, by almost every form of death, it was found, when all seemed ended, that there remained not a scanty gleanings of heretics only, but an ample harvest still to be gathered in, if not for the garner, for the fire. Soon,

however, it was plain that, if the work was to find its consummation, a stronger and a sterner hand was required than that of the Bishops, each in his own diocese, for this. The work was carried on by them in a manner too desultory, too intermittent, it may have been with too many touches of remorse; and Pope Gregory IX., on the plea that they were overtaken already, transferred this matter of inquisition into cases of heretical pravity to officers specially thereto named and delegated by himself (1232). It is not that nothing of the kind had found place already, for the rudiments of the future Inquisition must for some time have been forming; but here we have the first regular beginnings of this, as an organized and permanent institution of the Church. In the rules by which these Inquisitors should be guided every principle of natural equity was outraged. The accused were not to be confronted with the accusers, were not even to know their names; persons of infamous character might be received as witnesses against them; elaborate schemes for their treacherous entrapping were part of the instructions with which an Inquisitor was furnished; a large share of the goods of the condemned went to the judges who condemned them; the remainder, if sometimes to the Papal exchequer, very often to the temporal princes who should carry out the Church's sentence; whose cupidity it was thus sought to stimulate, and whose co-operation to reward. The guiltless children of the condemned were beggared: they could hold no office; there cleaved to them the brand of a lifelong dishonour. It was war, too, with the dead no less than with the living; for the digging up and scattering the bones of Wiclif was but one example out of many in like kind.

The machinery of this 'monstrous institution,' as Montalembert calls it, so wonderful in its wickedness and its

craft, did not fail in its object. Persecution was successful :—as generally in the end it is, where, with sufficient power to back it, and knowing exactly what it intends, it carries this intention through with a ruthless and relentless persistency. By the middle of the fourteenth century there were few Albigenses more; or, if single scattered heretics were still not unfrequent, the more important of the organized schismatical communities had been effectually broken up. Their chiefs had perished; of the rank and file some had conformed; others had found refuge and concealment in societies not so directly under the Church's ban; whole troops had shared in a common doom with their leaders; and thus in one way or another the peril of such a vast and successful revolt as at one time seemed imminent had passed away.

So scanty henceforth, scanty at least by comparison, the harvest of heretics appeared likely to prove, that the Inquisitors must for a while have feared lest their occupation was gone. But this did not prove so. They were able before long to develop a new activity in Spain, and one perhaps bloodier than any which had gone before. In the latter half of the fifteenth century the Inquisition found its main occupation in the burning of Jews; Torquemada alone sending to the stake some eight or nine thousand. These, the descendants of such as had been baptized by force (1391), were accused, and in very many instances truly, of still retaining and practising in secret the rites of their Jewish faith. By aid of such executions the Holy Office was able to keep its machinery in order and its hand in practice; and thus neither was wanting to its work, when in the sixteenth century the Reformation in Spain yielded to it, if not as numerous, yet a far nobler band of victims than any which, with perfidious words of mercy on its lips, it had in earlier times

delivered to the secular arm, and to a death the cruellest that could be devised.

Of all the bodies which thus in the Middle Ages joined hands in a revolt against the authority of Rome, and which had their hostility to her in common, the Waldenses, weak in numbers as compared with so many of the others, alone survived to greet the dawning of a brighter day. One would not willingly utter a single word which even malice could pervert into an apology for the persecutors; yet allegiance to the truth leaves me no choice but to say that the Waldenses alone survived, because, resting on a Scriptural foundation, they alone were worthy to survive. That motley group of discordant sects whereof you have just been hearing carried each and all in their own bosom the seeds of their own destruction. Under no conceivable circumstances could they have wrought any true deliverance for the suffering Church of God; since it is only the truth, and this truth they had not, which can make men free indeed. What the triumphs of Islâm were in the East, such would have been the triumph of any one of these sects in the West. No strength of indignation against the means and the weapons with which the battle against them was fought and won, should prevent us from acknowledging as much.

## LECTURE XVI.

*THE MENDICANT ORDERS.*

AN age productive in so many ways as the thirteenth century was, could scarcely remain barren in new associations for meeting the more urgent spiritual necessities of the time. It is true that during the two preceding centuries the number of religious Orders had increased so immensely that in the Fourth Lateran Council a further multiplication of these was prohibited. Any one, it was there pronounced, who would fain, as it was then called, enter a religion, must not seek to found a new Order, but must make his choice among those already existing. Circumstances, however, are stronger than men and the resolves of men; and Innocent III., himself the author of this decree, sanctioned two new Orders which, almost simultaneously founded, were destined before long to cast into the shade all the earlier, and to exercise an influence far greater than they in their palmyest days had ever known.

It might have seemed that no new religious excitement was possible, that every combination of the existing elements of monasticism had been tried and exhausted, that all which the most ingenious asceticism could imagine had been pushed to the furthest possible limits. But it is the privilege of genius to evoke a new creation, where to common eyes all appears barren and worn out. A new idea found its utterance in the Mendicant Orders.

Hitherto the monk, in his ideal perfection, had been one who, withdrawing from the world, had sought in prayer, penitence, and self-mortification, to set forward the salvation of his own soul; now he should be one who in labours of self-denying love, in dispensing the Word of life, should seek the salvation of others. Hitherto he had fled from the world, as one who, in conflict with it, must inevitably be worsted; now he should make war upon the world and overcome it;—nothing doubting that in seeking the salvation of others he should best work out his own.

Dominic Guzman (b. 1170, d. 1221) was a Spanish priest, of a noble Castilian name. Having accompanied his Bishop on a preaching mission in the South of France for the conversion of the anti-Catholic sects which were swarming there, he became aware of the imminent danger which threatened the Papacy from the widespread revolt of men's spirits. Nor was he less impressed by the unfitness of the secular or parochial Clergy to contend with spiritual weapons against the sectaries; by the ignorance and sloth of the lower Clergy, the worldly splendour of the higher;—this all contrasting most unfavourably with the simplicity in life of their adversaries, their diligence and zeal in propagating their doctrines. He saw, too, how little help was to be gotten from the older monastic Orders. Estranged from the poor, their own vows of poverty eluded, at their best seeking first and chiefly their own spiritual welfare, if not seeking this alone, they wholly failed to meet the needs of the time. It was an aggressive Order, one that should boldly take up the challenge which the sectaries had thrown down, that the crisis demanded. Such an Order he was resolved his Preaching Brethren—the name expresses the central idea for the carrying out of which they existed,—should be;



devoting themselves to the preaching of the Word, to the spiritual oversight of the sheep everywhere scattered abroad without a shepherd, and as another aspect of the same mission, to the repression and extirpation of all heresies. This proposed extirpation of all *heresies*, in itself a most commendable work, was before long exchanged, by a change only too easy, for the extirpation of all *heretics*, truly or falsely so called; a task in which the Dominicans—*Domini canes*, or the Lord's watch-dogs, as they loved to be called,—obtained a bad eminence; for whether they were or were not the original founders of the Inquisition, it is certain that in after years the principal working of it was in their hands.

We must here distinguish between Dominic and the Dominicans. When Dominic is charged with having followed in the wake of Simon de Montfort's crusading armies, which succeeded the more peaceful mission wherein he himself had borne a part; when he is accused of approving, at least by his presence, the hideous cruelties and still more hideous perfidies which marked that war, or, worse than this, with having gleaned for the Inquisitor's fire what had been spared (where anything *was* spared), by the crusader's sword, it is mere justice to say that there is no contemporary evidence whatever to bear out these accusations. Dean Milman does not scruple to say, 'his title of Founder of the Inquisition belongs to legend not to history.'

The Albigensian Horror began in 1209. It was not till its first fury was spent, that he could hope to effect much in that line which he had already marked out as his own; but in 1215 he found his way to Rome. His projected Order did not at the outset find much favour with Innocent III., who had no mind so soon to go back from his own decree, and who thought that this new

earnestness might very well fit itself into one of the already existing moulds. But after a while other counsels prevailed. The Pope, who had seen in a vision (for so runs the legend), the tottering wall of the Lateran Basilica sustained by a Spaniard and an Italian, and who now beheld in Dominic one who might make good one-half of that vision, overcame his hesitation and gave the Papal allowance to the new Order. Honorius III. in the year following more formally ratified what Innocent had done; bestowing upon it the title of *The Preaching Brethren* (*Fratres Prædicatores*), which it had not hitherto in any authoritative instrument obtained. The new Society failed to take any mighty hold of men's hearts and imaginations at the first. For this it was necessary that it should adopt the rule of absolute poverty, which, however unwilling the Dominicans may be to admit the fact, they certainly borrowed from the Franciscans. It was this adoption, some five years after the foundation of the Order (1220), which first secured the wondrous future that was in store for it, and enabled it to run a not unequal race with that other Order, at once its rival and its peer. At the same time this rule of absolute poverty, which was of the essence of the Franciscan Order, was only an accident of the Dominican. The extinction of heresy was the end which Dominic proposed to himself; the renunciation on the part of his followers of all worldly wealth was only a means for the surer attaining of this end.

A man of a will which, itself indomitable, was mighty to subdue the wills of others, of a strong practical turn, of wonderful sagacity to read the signs of the times, with absolute singleness of aim devoted to the interests of that Church beside which he could not conceive any other, Dominic was yet wanting in many of those more

tender traits which so much attract us in the character of St. Francis. Even those who exalt him the most, and those who knew him the nearest, suffer this to be seen. 'Austere' is the epithet which in a Papal Bull is applied to him; while a line of Dante's about him, 'Good to his friends, and *dreadful* to his foes'—*crudo* is the word used—may be taken for praise or blame, or for something made up of both, as we will.

Francis Bernardone (b. 1182, d. 1226), called of Assisi, to distinguish him from others who have borne the same name, was the son of a prosperous merchant in that little Umbrian town, which the traveller, journeying to Rome and having just left Perugia behind him, may see from the railway a few miles distant to the left, nestled upon the lower slopes of the Apennines. Whatever may have been the vanities of his gay and brilliant youth,—and by vanities I imply no more than I say,—he was early taken hold of by the power of God's Word. He had already broken with the world, though he had not yet discovered what his wider mission should be, when one day hearing the Gospel read which told of the sending forth of the Twelve Apostles without scrip or staff or shoes or purse, he exclaimed that here was what he wanted; and, without prolonging the time, he at once proceeded to fashion his life after this Apostolic pattern. Poverty, as Dante tells us, which had now been a widow for eleven hundred years, was the bride whom he espoused, and from whom he was resolved that nothing should divorce him. There were indeed Orders already existing of which poverty was the rule; but their poverty was more or less illusory. The Order, as such, might be rich, and in its corporate capacity might possess houses and lands and money; it was only 'peculiarity,'

as it was called, separate possession by individual members, which was renounced. But Francis aimed higher. He and his should be Mendicants, beggars, that is, of their daily bread, having nothing in this world which they could call their own, however they might possess all things in God.

The men of his city had been already perplexed whether to admire or to mock, to count him a saint or a fool: and certainly there did not want eccentric elements in his character, a fine madness, which might for a season suggest these doubts. They were now perplexed still more. But it was not long before the might of self-denying and self-offering love solved all doubts and put all mockers and gainsayers to silence. And then there gathered to him one and another, and so a little company, whom he bade go forth, east, and west, and north, and south, to preach the Gospel to the poor. For, indeed, intense sympathy with the poor, a seeing and a serving of Christ in his suffering members, a craving to be himself poorest of the poor, not stooping to their aid as from a superior height, but himself tasting the very worst of their lot,—this was the master-passion of his soul. Had not his Lord said, ‘I am come to send fire on the earth’? even the fire, as Francis rightly understood it, of divine love; and this love, judge what we may of the idea on which his Order rested, has perhaps never burned brighter in human heart than in his. In the circle of that love the whole creation, animate and inanimate, was included. The sun was his brother, the moon his sister; doves ate out of his hand, lay in his bosom. A poet, ‘a Minnesinger of the divine love,’ he has bequeathed to us a hymn in the vulgar tongue, which, with all its imperfection of form (for indeed Italian poetry and, we may add, the Italian language were hardly yet born),

is worthy of all admiration. Nor is it without its significance that to two of his early scholars, Thomas of Celano and Jacopone, we are probably indebted for two world-famous hymns,—one the most solemn, the other the most pathetic, in the whole circle of Latin hymnology,—the *Dies Iræ* and the *Stabat Mater*.

What remains of his life must be very briefly told. He too found his way to Rome in 1215, the year of the Fourth Lateran Council. Whether he and Dominic there met is doubtful. The account of the friendly counsel which at Rome they took together, the graceful story of St. Dominic celebrating, with St. Francis as serving Deacon, all this has no contemporary evidence to support it; and may very possibly have been all invented with a purpose, in the hope of allaying the jealousy between the Orders, by making it plain that no jealousy existed between their founders. Other points are more certain,—as that Innocent III. was at first little disposed to extend any countenance to the beggarly suppliant; or to turn another company of enthusiasts, armed with his sanction, loose upon the world; that in the case of Francis as in that of Dominic there was something very like a repulse at the outset. On second thoughts, however, the Pope gave allowance to Francis and to his rule; being too sagacious a ruler to commit the fault which the heads of our English Church committed when they repelled and refused to enlist in the Church's service the zeal of Wesley and of his followers. This allowance was, indeed, only verbal; for the Pope, no doubt, preferred to wait and see what would come of this new enthusiasm before further committing himself to it. Formal approbation Francis did not obtain till after Innocent's death. But with such approval as he had gotten he returned in triumph to Assisi. And now the little mustard seed

which he had planted grew and grew, though he was not to see it as the great tree overshadowing the whole of Western Christendom; for, worn out with toil and travail and austerities, he expired at the early age of forty-four (Oct. 4, 1226).

The rapidity with which the two Orders spread was marvellous; the Franciscan, which was the more democratic, and recruited itself from the ranks of the people, growing still faster than the Dominican, which had always a certain aristocratic element about it, so that almost from the beginning the spiritual direction of the upper classes fell into its hands. Thus not more than two and twenty years after the death of Francis his Order numbered 8,000 religious houses. Many causes wrought together for this. The Mendicants embodied the ideal of the Evangelical life, as in those ages conceived, more completely than any of the preceding Orders had done. Living upon alms, and thus finding a table everywhere spread for them, they did not require, as the others did, permanent landed endowments before they could found their houses. They basked moreover in the peculiar favour not of the people only, but of the Popes, who soon recognized in them their most faithful and their most efficient militia. An extent, a number of members, an influence such as it had taken older Orders two or three hundred years to acquire, they acquired and surpassed in twenty or thirty. Nor, however swift their subsequent declension may have been, is it to be denied that in their earlier and better days a mighty work of revival was wrought by them throughout Western Christendom. One might compare it in many respects to the Methodist revival in England during the last century, only that it was on a vaster scale and over a far wider area. It is true that it was not always 'the sincere milk of the word' with which souls were fed; but

whatever admixture of error and superstition there may have been, it was much for multitudes, neglected and forgotten so long, that there should be any who cared for their souls. Grostête, the great Bishop of Lincoln, wholly intolerant of monks as he was, could greet the first coming of the friars into England with words like these, 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.'

What marvel if the Church, and the world that was inextricably mixed up with the Church, were persuaded that in Holy Scripture itself there must be types and prophecies of the workers of these wonders; that some saw in them 'the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth' (Zech. iv. 11-14); that they were hailed as the two forerunners of Christ's Second Coming, who should go before Him in the spirit and power of Enoch and Elijah; each, indeed, having his own peculiar glory; the one to find his place in the Order of the Seraphim, who love most; the other in that of the Cherubim, who know most; Francis, so Dante describes him, an Ardour, inflaming the world with the fire of divine love; Dominic a Splendour, causing the light of the glory of God to shine over all the earth? Such was the language which was presently spoken about them; already in their lifetime there had gathered round them a whole world of legend and of wonder.

But this immense success which waited on the Orders in their early days aroused other feelings besides those of admiration. It is easy to imagine the intense jealousy with which the Mendicants, their rapid growth, the special favour in so many quarters, above all in the highest, vouchsafed them, were regarded; and the many by whom this jealousy was entertained. There was first the jealousy of the older monastic foundations, beaten on

their own ground and now hopelessly distanced by these younger competitors. There was the jealousy of the Universities; above all of the University of Paris, which saw with indignation one and presently more of its principal chairs of instruction invaded and occupied by these haughty intruders. There was the jealousy of the Bishops, who beheld their authority set at nought; the Mendicants, among other privileges bestowed upon them, being permitted to hold directly from the Pope, they and their Houses owning but a shadow of allegiance to the Bishop in whose diocese they were. But above all, there was the jealousy of the parochial Clergy. Whatever their faults and shortcomings may have been, the parochial system itself was as all-important to the Church then as at the present day. It was now threatened with dissolution. The monks had not been permitted to celebrate, except within their own walls, the divine offices; and for a long while there had not been more of them ordained than were actually necessary for this. But these, with other privileges, as to baptize, to hear confessions, to administer extreme unction, to bury in their own churches,—this last permission a very mine of wealth—were all accorded to these favoured Friars, who exercised their intrusive ministrations where they would, with no license obtained from the Bishop, no leave granted by the parish priest. They are accused of everywhere seeking to undermine the respect of the people for their appointed guides; bidding all to come to them, who knew the secrets of spiritual direction, who could discern between leprosy and leprosy; who were not dumb dogs, blind guides, as were others. And multitudes came; being only too glad to confess their sins to the wandering friar whom they never had seen before, whom perhaps they never should see again; so sparing themselves the shame



of a confession to their own Clergy ; not to say that as a rule, if we may believe Chaucer's word concerning the Mendicant absolver, 'He was an easy man to give penance.' The mischief reached such a height that Pope Innocent IV., in 1254, made some feeble efforts to revoke or limit these special privileges which his predecessors had lavished on their new favourites with so prodigal a hand. The Orders, however, had grown too strong, and succeeded in retaining all or nearly all which had been once conceded to them.

Praised, exalted, glorified at the beginning, it was not long before an almost universal chorus of indignant complaint rose up against them. They were meant to be patterns of Evangelical humility,—this humility stamping itself on their dress, their discipline, on the very names which they bore. But it very soon became evident that the secret of humility does not lie in calling ourselves by humble names. One may call himself 'Servant of the servants of God,' and yet lord it over his fellow-servants with an arrogance unparalleled. So these might name themselves Lesser Brethren, even as some, counting this too little, claimed to be Minims or Least, and some Postremists or Last, without for all this being a whit the humbler ; nay rather, being only the prouder on the strength of this ostentatious humility. Upon every side were heard complaints of their intolerable pride, of their arrogant contempt for all but themselves.

Nor did it fair better with the schemes of compulsory poverty, which should bring those who adopted them into a closer likeness to Him who made Himself so poor for us. None of those schemes will ever of themselves give us detachment from the creature, that poverty of spirit to which alone a blessedness is linked : not to say that, while Francis was still alive, evasions of the strictness of his rule

forbidding even a corporate possession of worldly goods, began to find favour with many among his followers, and much more after his death ; while presently devices for turning godliness into gain, such as had never hitherto presented themselves to the most ingenious of those who went before, were devised by these. Thus the faithful who remained in the world were invited, and many availed themselves of the invitation, by a money payment to secure for themselves Letters of Fraternity, as they were called, entitling them to a share in the prayers, the merits, the masses of the Order, in which, as in some great mercantile concern, they were thus to become sleeping partners. Poverty was the bride to which St. Francis himself remained faithful to the end ; but it was a bride from whom his followers, or a large company of these, were only anxious to be divorced. They might not —so it was now sought to interpret their Founder's rule—possess anything in fee ; but they might enjoy the usufruct of whatever lands, houses, and other worldly goods the piety of the faithful bestowed upon them, the absolute ownership being vested in the Pope. The property thus formally made over to the Pope, but of which he was only the trustee, grew to so vast an amount, that ere long these Orders united the boast of being the poorest, with the reality of being the richest, Orders in Christendom. Conscious as they must have been of this evasion of their vow,—an evasion so transparent that at last John XXII. refused to be any longer a party to it,—it is strange to find this vaunt of being the only genuine followers of Apostolic poverty continually in their mouths. The monks of the older foundations might be ‘possessors’—for this was the invidious term which they applied to them—but not they, who had no possessions of their own. How soon the salt had grown saltless, how

swift the degeneration had been, we may gather from Chaucer, who is nowhere wittier, but alas! nowhere coarser, than in his unsavoury tale, of which a Mendicant Friar is the hero. This tale, it is true, is put into the mouth of a summoner, an officer of the Bishop's Court, to whom a Begging Friar, intercepting so many gains that otherwise might have fallen to his share, must have been poison; yet, making every allowance, it reveals an abyss of contempt into which the unworthier members of these Orders had fallen, such as left almost no accusation too mean or too hateful to be brought against them.

And other matter of scandal and offence more than enough they afforded. Having triumphed over the older Orders, and thrust Benedictine and Clugnian and Cistercian, all that men hitherto had honoured the most, into the shade, they presently turned their arms against one another, each Society seeking to glorify itself above the other in the surpassing glory of its founder. Already in the lifetime of these this unseemly rivalry between their several followers had begun, a rivalry which Dante significantly rebukes, when he puts the praises of St. Francis in the mouth of the greatest Dominican, and those of St. Dominic in that of a scarcely less illustrious Franciscan. But in such a pitting of founders one against the other, the Franciscans had manifestly the advantage. The first idea of a Mendicant Order belonged to their chief; all others, Dominicans, Carmelites, Augustinian-Eremites, did but follow his lead. Then, too, divine favours had been vouchsafed to him, so his followers averred, which were unique. Who but he could say with St. Paul, 'I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus'?

A word or two here on these marks or wounds, these *stigmata* in his hands, his feet, his side, to which they thus

appealed. Assuming their existence as sufficiently proved by contemporary evidence, I must wholly reject the explanation which sees in them special marks of divine favour miraculously imprinted on his body to bring him into closer conformity with his crucified Lord ; while on the other hand I dismiss with scorn the suggestion that they were marks artificially and fraudfully brought about by the Saint himself, for his own greater glorification, with or without the assistance or connivance of others. There is no *a priori* ground for refusing credit to the statements of those who testified that they had seen these wound-prints and handled them. A like phenomenon has since repeated itself so often, there have been so many analogous cases verified beyond all doubt, some eighty at the least, by no means all in the Roman Catholic Church, that it is idle to urge a physical impossibility. Neither is the matter after all so unintelligible. We know something now of the reactive power of the spirit, which is the stronger, in moulding and fashioning the flesh, which is the weaker,—enough to bring all that may here look so inexplicable within the range of things natural. Figure to yourselves a man with a temperament so impressible, of an organization so delicate, penetrated through and through with the anguish of his Lord's sufferings, passionately and continually dwelling on all the circumstances of his crucifixion, yearning, so to speak, to be crucified with Him. For myself when I so do, I can quite understand how all this found an utterance in these visible tokens ; and I am as confident that there was no miracle as I am that there was no fraud.

But if this so-called 'prerogative of the wounds' was his and his only, St. Dominic had his prerogatives as well. This theme, however, I shall willingly quit ; and you too will gladly learn that these rivalries, since such they were

to be, after a while were transferred to nobler fields ; and, in times when the Orders retained but faint traces of that mendicancy which was their distinctive feature at the first, the ablest sons of the one and of the other,—such as a Thomas Aquinas and a Duns Scotus,—contended in rival chairs of theology and philosophy which of these Orders should rule the thought, and guide the intellect of Christendom. But of this long, and in many aspects honourable rivalry I hope to speak by and bye. Here I must be content to express the astonishment and utter perplexity with which I read in Lacordaire's *Life of St. Dominic*, that 'no breath of jealousy has ever sullied the pure crystal of the friendship which has existed between the Orders for now six hundred years.' It is difficult to imagine the bank of boundless ignorance on the part of his readers upon which, saying this, Lacordaire must have presumed he could draw. Who is there, knowing anything of the Council of Trent, who yet knows so little as not to be aware, that there was war within the walls, between Franciscan and Dominican, no less than war without ? and what shall we say to all the spiteful hindrances with which the Franciscans sought to prevent, but could only delay, the canonization of the famous female Saint of the Dominicans, St. Catharine of Siena ?

A few words in conclusion. What shall we say to these things ? That whole work of the founders of these two Orders, shall we count it a fantastic tissue, shot through with threads of superstition and error, a piece of medieval extravagance, absurd from the beginning, and only meeting the failure which it deserved ? Shall we say of St. Francis, with a writer of the last century, that the kindest thing to think about him is that he was crazy ? This would not be a profitable attitude

of mind and heart in which to regard that story of high self-sacrifice which you just have heard. Shall we say on the other hand that here was a wondrous outcome of the spirit of Christ, and that, if love had not grown cold, we should behold similar manifestations at this day? As little can I contemplate this as a just and wholesome conclusion to draw from this history.

But to answer that question aright, I would claim first to distinguish between the man and his work. The work, however marvellous the success which attended it at the first, I believe to have had seeds of failure sown in it from the beginning. The disciples of St. Francis,—for he was in fact the father of both Orders so far as they were Mendicant,—were to live upon the alms of the faithful. This sounds very well; but look at it a little closer, and what does it imply? Seeing that he did not invite his followers to a deliberate suicide, what was this but saying that they should live not upon their own labour, but upon the labour of other people; that instead of working for themselves, others should work for them? Now, doubtless there are those who may lawfully leave to others the supply of their bodily necessities, in a just confidence that they give back to the world in another shape many times more than they receive; nay further, there are who may not merely accept, but may claim this supply, with no injury thereby done to their spiritual life. St. Paul was such a one, though he very sparingly made use of this liberty; and Francis himself, and many with gifts far inferior to his, might do the same. But figure to yourselves men gathered by thousands and tens of thousands, and after the first fine enthusiasm had passed away; often with no inward vocation; not a few of them seeking to escape the primeval law—‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread’—and how was this scheme of

sustentation likely to work? We know how it did work, what a byword the Begging Friar ere long became for all his ignoble arts, his shameless asking, his importunity which would take no refusal, his creeping into houses, 'Sir Penetransdomos' as he was early called (with allusion, no doubt, to 2 Tim. iii. 6), his wheedling of silly women, his having of rich men's persons in admiration because of advantage, his watchings by wealthy death-beds, so to secure a legacy to his house, his promising of spiritual benefits which often he must have known were not his to grant, in exchange for temporal gifts, his allowing men, for example, to believe that it would profit them in that dreadful day of judgment to have been buried in the garb of a Mendicant. Bonaventura, himself the General of the Order, and writing not fifty years after Francis' death, does not scruple to say that already in his time the sight of a Begging Friar in the distance had become more formidable than that of a robber.

But the glorification of 'able beggary,' as Wiclif indignantly calls it, besides working in this way for the moral vulgarizing of those who practised it, made itself injuriously felt in circles wider still, helped to cast a general slight upon honourable labour. How could it do otherwise, when they who were counted to have chosen the highest life, not merely themselves withdrew from toil, but gloried in this withdrawal as being a part of that perfection, or a means to that perfection, which they aimed at? Nothing at this day strikes one in South Italy more painfully, and in parts of Spain as well, than the utter want of self-respect evinced in this matter by the whole poorer population. Man, woman, and child, whatever other occupation they may follow, have superadded that of beggar, which they exercise with no sort of shame, and as the most natural thing in the world. Little as the

sublime Mendicant of Assisi foresaw or intended this, he did much to bequeath to these lands the eating sore of an almost universal mendicancy ; made it for multitudes impossible to understand the blessed links which bind together the two utterances of the Psalmist : ‘ Thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands ; ’ and, ‘ O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be ! ’ And after all he struck no mortal blow at the sin of covetousness. Not money, but ‘ the love of money,’ St. Paul tells us, ‘ is the root of all evil.’ That he struck no mortal blow at this even among his own followers, we saw just now. Already during his life, still more after his death, one pitiful evasion of the strictness of his rule was devised and then another ; while such as were resolved to abide by the rigour of it despite of Papal decisions in favour of laxity (see p. 221), were dealt with as heretics, not a few of them expiating their fidelity to their master’s Rule at the stake.

On the idea by aid of which he hoped to regenerate the Church I need not say more. So far as he effected anything considerable here, it was the man and not the Rule that wrought the mighty works. He, let him have fallen into what mistakes he may, must always remain one of the most wonderful figures which the wonderful story of the life of Christ in his members presents. It is these, these elect souls, to whatever age and whatever communion they may have belonged, let there have cleaved to them what extravagancies or eccentricities there may,—who startle the world and the Church from those dreams of careless ease and indulgence into which the one is quite as ready to fall as the other. It is these, of whom but to read or hear upbraids our selfish lives, and rebukes our lukewarm sympathies for the suffering members of Christ’s body.



## LECTURE XVII

*THE WALDENSES.*

WHEN God has a special work for a people to do, He often makes their outward environment such as shall be the most favourable for their doing it. There is a real correspondence between them, on the one side, and their appointed home, the bounds of their local habitation, on the other. It was thus with the Jews. Till the fulness of time came, they were to be 'a people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations;' and Palestine, as has been often shown, was exactly the land to keep them thus apart from the rest of the world. But while thus the Jewish points of contact with the world were few, Greece, with quite another mission, had its points of contact innumerable. All shore and harbour, Greece was everywhere accessible, everywhere invited and facilitated approach. Not otherwise the principal seats of the Waldenses had on a smaller scale their fitness too. It is in mountainous districts, in remote valleys, such as those wherein they dwelt, that men cling the longest to old traditions, customs, faith,—are least affected by the revolutions which are altering the general face of the world; while at the same time these mountains and valleys are not fastnesses which shut up their dwellers so strictly that they can neither influence others, nor be influenced by them.

Certainly they were not so in this case; for it would

be altogether a mistake to think of the Waldenses as strictly confined to their narrow Alpine haunts. Geographically divided into two groups, according as they dwelt on the Italian or the French slopes of the Alps, their earliest home was on the French side, in Dauphiny and Provence, as their oldest name, 'Poor Men of Lyons,' sufficiently attests. But they were numerous in North Italy as well; and far more widely scattered over the whole of central Europe than their present narrow dwelling place and scanty numbers would at all suggest. They had congregations in Florence, in Genoa, in Venice, above all in Milan; there were Waldensian communities as far south as Calabria; they were not unknown in Aragon; still less in Switzerland; at a later day they found their way to Bohemia, and joined hands with the Hussites there. In England indeed they made little or no way. Wiclif, though always well pleased to refer to those in whose footsteps he claimed to tread, appears to have been wholly ignorant of their existence.

From the language which many at this day hold, one might be tempted to suppose that for several centuries, during the greater part of the Middle Ages, the true Church of Christ had retreated out of the open sight of men, and was nowhere to be traced except in the little communities which I speak of. Milton himself has not hesitated to claim for them the honour which belongs to those

'who kept the truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones.'

With the freest admission of the many grievous corruptions which during a long period deformed the Catholic Church, with a no less hearty acknowledgment of what we owe to these Alpine witnesses, we may still decline to accept this statement concerning the objects of our fathers'

worship, or to read the past history of the Church as in such statements it is implicitly proposed to read it.

For myself let me at the outset of this Lecture express my conviction that the whole attempt to ascribe to the Waldenses an earlier date than the latter half of the twelfth century, to throw back their origin some two hundred years, or sometimes much more than this, even to the times of Claudius of Turin (d. 839), is one which will not stand the test of historical criticism; while the endeavour to vindicate for them this remote antiquity has introduced infinite confusion into their whole history. The date of Waldo, who, as I cannot doubt, is rightly recognized as their founder, we certainly know. When it is sought to get rid of their relation to him as embodied in the very name which they bear, and to change this name into Vallenses, the Men of the Valleys or the Dalesmen, it is a transformation which has no likelihood, philological or historic, to recommend it. In times past it has been often urged that a most important document of their own, *The Noble Lesson* (of which more anon), claimed for itself a date which would compel us to recognize the existence of Waldenses before Waldo, and thus earlier than the latter half of the twelfth century; but no one sufficiently acquainted with the facts concerning this document, as they now are known, would affirm this any longer.

At the same time a refusal to admit the remoter ancestry which is sometimes claimed for the Waldenses, must not be construed as a denial of all connexion between them and the remonstrants of an earlier date. The medieval Church system, so far as it was a departure from Apostolical simplicity, fashioned itself under continual protests; some of these utterly insane, and encountering departures from Scripture in one direction by

far wilder departures in another ; but others having Scripture and the unbroken tradition of the Church from the times of the Apostles for their warrant and justification. Now, if any choose to call some early protesters of this last and better kind the ancestors of the Waldenses, there is no reason why they should not use this language. Agobard (d. 841) was an ancestor ; his contemporary, Claudius of Turin, was an ancestor ; but they were ancestors only in as much as they wrought in the same direction, and were animated by the same spirit. When more is claimed for them, we have no choice but to say that no historic connexion between these and those can be traced ; that a vast gulf of centuries, not historically bridged over, separates them from one another.

Peter Waldo,—for we will not withhold from him this Christian name, although there is no authority for it anterior to the beginning of the fifteenth century,—was a rich citizen and merchant of Lyons. Not satisfied with those scanty portions of Scripture doled out to the laity in divine services, and yearning above all for a larger knowledge of the Gospels, he obtained from two friends among the priesthood a copy of these last and of some other portions of Scripture translated into the Romance language, a collection also of sayings from the Fathers. The whole movement remained to the end true to this its first motive—the desire, namely, for a fuller acquaintance with the Word of God. That Word he now resolved to make the rule of his life. But how should conformity to this pattern best be attained ? Some may be slow to receive it, but there can, I think, be no manner of doubt that Waldo started very much from the same starting-point as Francis of Assisi :—namely, that the most Apostolic life, and most nearly conformed to the pattern which the Saviour left, was one of absolute

renunciation of all worldly possessions. He too, as a first step, sells all that he has, and bestows upon the poor. In the name which he adopts for himself and for the companions whom he presently associates with himself the same sense of a voluntary poverty, as that which above all they should embody in their lives, speaks out. On this side of the Alps they are Poor Men of Lyons ; on the Italian Poor Men of Lombardy.

Before long it was brought home to him that this Apostolic life was very incomplete, if it was not a life of active service ; that the knowledge of the Scriptures which he and those associated with him had obtained, they were bound also to impart. And now acting upon this conviction he and his followers began to preach in the streets of Lyons, to find their way into houses, to itinerate the country round. Waldo had no intention herein of putting himself in opposition to the Church, of being a Reformer in any other sense than St. Francis or St. Bernard was a Reformer, a quickener, that is, and reviver of the Church's spiritual life. His protest was against practical mischiefs, against negligences and omissions of duty on their part who should have taught the people, and did not. Doctrinal protest at this time there was none.

But in the judgment of Rome all forms of religious earnestness were suspicious which did not spring directly from herself. A true instinct told her that such a community as was projected, growing out of the bosom of the laity, drawing its spiritual life so directly from Holy Scripture, could not in the long run work otherwise than unfavourably for her ; and in 1178 the Archbishop of Lyons forbade their preaching or expounding any more. Such as did not submit had no choice but to quit Lyons, and betake themselves elsewhere. And thus it came to pass that not the city already so illustrious in ecclesiastical

story, where Irenæus taught and Blandina suffered,—not the city of Agobard,—not that which had already given to this company of later dissidents their name,—but ‘the Alpine mountains cold’ must shelter these outcasts, and in return be made famous by their presence.

But even after this prohibition Waldo did not at once renounce the hope that he might be permitted to found a religious guild within the Church. Deputies of his with a copy of his translation of Scripture, and with the rule of his proposed Order, found their way to Rome, humbly seeking of Pope Alexander III. his sanction and approval. An English Archdeacon, Walter Mapes, who has left behind him some very clever, but not always very edifying, poems in the rhymed Latin of his age,—if indeed these are his,—was present at the Papal Court at the time; and was one of a Board to whom it was referred to make proof of what these men taught, and report to the Pope. The Archdeacon relates with much glee how he prepared a theological pitfall for them,—one, it must be owned, sufficiently harmless in character,—into which, amid the laughter of many, these simple men, whose own theology was rather of the Bible than of the Schools, failed not at once to fall. Whether this at all affected the issue I know not; but the Pope, counting them ignorant and unlettered, as no doubt in one sense they were, dismissed them with a refusal which would have condemned to absolute silence. Unable to obtain the Papal authorization they now went forward without it. Thus, running before they were sent, as Pope Lucius III. lays to their charge, they were at the Council of Verona (1183) by him put under the Church’s ban. But they too could cite Scripture; and urging words of St. James, ‘To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin,’ they did not desist.

After a while Innocent III. saw the mistake which his predecessor had committed. Under his auspices a Society was founded (1209), embodying as much of Waldo's original intention as was consistent with due subordination to the interests of Rome. It was his hope to absorb into this *Order of Poor Catholics* those who were now in danger of being estranged from the Church for ever. But the new Order made no way, would take no root. Even so potent a charmer as the great Pontiff himself was unable to entangle more than a very few in the yoke from which they had once escaped. Failing this, he repeated a few years later, at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the Church's sentence against the Waldenses, including them under a common ban with the Cathari and the whole rabble rout of Manichæans and others with whom they have so often since been confounded: for thus confounded they have been, and this alike by foes and by friends. It may seem strange that both should have done them this same wrong, than which there could scarcely have been a greater. But the motive in either case is not difficult to trace. Enemies have sought to confound them, that so there might be imputed to the Waldenses any evil which had been brought home to the Albigenses; and, these last having been convicted of enormous errors in doctrine and practice, that the condemnation might include the Waldenses as well. Friends have sought to identify them out of the wish to enlarge the scanty band of witnesses for Scriptural and Apostolical truth in the dark ages of the Church; as certainly it would prove no small addition to the number of these witnesses, if the Albigenses might be counted among them.

And yet, notwithstanding this formal condemnation, neither then nor at any time before the Reformation was

the attitude of the Waldenses to Rome, or of Rome to the Waldenses, exactly the same as ruled between her and the other bodies which secretly conspired against her, or openly defied her. It is true that they were included in the same anathema as the others; that Rome, enduring no departure in great or small from her teaching, counted all dissidents worthy of death; 'using,' as Fuller has it, 'the same severity against wolves and wandering sheep, foes and prodigal children;' but, for all this, the war between her and the Waldenses was not in those earlier times altogether the same war to the outrance which was waged between her and the Manichæan Cathari or the pantheistic Brethren of the Free Spirit. These latter were Irreconcilables, and never could be anything else. In their sight Rome was simply the Synagogue of Satan, and either she must perish or they:—the same moral universe could not endure them both. But neither in this nor in any other matter did the Waldenses own any solidarity or make any common cause with the other sectaries of the time. For them the Church of Rome was a Church which had grievously fallen away from the purity of the faith,—which had overlaid the truth with numerous errors; but they did not deny that souls were saved in her, did not regard themselves so much a Church apart, as rather the sound kernel of the Church. Seeing that they attended divine offices in Catholic churches when they were permitted so to do, that their children were baptized by Catholic priests, that they received the Holy Communion at their hands,—of all which there is abundant proof,—it is plain that in their sight Rome had not as a Church absolutely forfeited her right to this name.

Then, too, however unfriendly the writers of that age may be, they bring no such charges against the



Waldenses as they bring so abundantly against the other sectaries. Their enemies themselves being judges, their conversation was edifying; they went not to law brother with brother; they swore no profane oaths, indeed no oaths at all; a lie was in their sight a mortal sin. They shunned taverns, dances, revelries, and all occasions which might serve as provocatives to evil. They were not eager to grow rich, but lived, and were well content to live, by the labour of their hands,—the whole tenour and fashion of their lives a rebuke to the unholy living of multitudes calling themselves Catholics, nor least to the conversation of many who ministered in the holiest things. In ages of the fiercest fanaticism, it would have been quite impossible, as a modern Roman Catholic Church-historian admits, to get up a Crusade against them.

Those who have the same enemies are not therefore of necessity friends; but, admitting this, so long as the Cathari were a danger and a menace to the Roman Church; the intense aversion of the Waldenses to these ‘devils,’—for so they called them,—must have constituted some sort of bond, however unacknowledged, between them and the Church. Certainly it is not a little curious to read, and in a treatise written against them, that not seldom a priest, engaged in controversy with a Manichæan, invoked the aid of a Waldensian, as better versed in the Scriptures than himself, by whose help to convince a gainsayer. The operation of all these causes could not fail to exercise a certain influence on the relations between the Church and those whom she had put nominally under a common ban with the Manichæan and the Libertine. It may be urged indeed that, if she did not burn so many of these subalpine dissidents as she burned of the Albigenses, this is sufficiently explained by the fact that there were not so many, or nearly so many,

to burn. No doubt this is true, and explains something, but does not explain all. Even in proportion to their numbers the Waldenses were much more rarely the victims of the Inquisition; and in what has just been said an explanation of this may be found.

It is only too easy to place a stronger emphasis on the points of difference between them in the earlier periods of their existence and the dominant Church, than the actual facts would warrant. And doubtless the tendency of later times has been to put them forward as more distinctly protesting against the whole body of medieval accretions to the truth or departures from the truth, and thus more Protestant, than they actually were. Neither is it hard to perceive how this has come to pass. I do not press here the temptation which lies so very near to us, when we write the story of some in whom we are deeply interested, to write it as we should like it to have been, rather than as it actually was. This may have done something; but it is easy to perceive a more influential source of error. What the Waldenses learned to hold and teach after contact with the Hussites in the fifteenth century, and still more after communications held in the sixteenth with some chief continental Reformers, has been regarded as that which they held from the beginning. But it is altogether a reversing of the true order of things to make the Waldenses teachers of the Reformers: they were rather learners from them. Sufficient attention has not always been paid to the fact that, as a result of this intercourse, distinctive features of their own teaching had vanished, distinctive features of the theology of the Reformation had been adopted. And the error of confounding what the Waldenses were and what they taught in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with what they had been and had taught in the twelfth

and thirteenth was the more difficult to escape, seeing that, after this intercourse held with religious bodies stronger and often having clearer views than their own, there was on their part a not unnatural desire to bring their earlier confessions of faith, hymns, liturgies, and the like, into perfect agreement with later convictions. Where this was done, if anywhere it was done, with intent to arrogate for the past of their history merits which did not rightly belong to it, such a falsification of facts deserves the most earnest reprobation. But such reactive dealing with their standards of faith and other authoritative writings is explicable on perfectly honourable grounds, and may very well have expressed no more than their desire to bring these into agreement with their later convictions.

*The Noble Lesson*, to which I have referred already, though not nearly so old as for long it was supposed to be, is about the oldest and most authoritative document to which we can appeal. This tractate, written in verse, is an earnest summons to repentance, to amendment of life, to the exercise of Christian graces, to the doing of good works,—all this in view of the shortness of this present life; the greatness of the rewards, and the terribleness of the penalties which after death severally await those who have done good or done evil; with a solemn warning against that peace which is no peace, against all those spiritual drugs by which the Church of Rome quieted or rather stupefied the consciences of men in regard of judgment to come. But what is most remarkable is this, that while Christ's sufferings and death are there set forth as proof that as many as will live godly must suffer persecution, there is, in all the five hundred or more lines that make up this poem, only a single line which contains a reference, and that but historically,

to the death of Christ as a redemptive act ; no word at all of the duty and blessedness of making by faith the benefits of that atoning death our own. Elsewhere I find the same immense omission ; and indeed everywhere a certain thinness more or less the characteristic of all the religious literature of the Waldenses ;—with the exception indeed of one prayer in verse, called *Lo Payre Eternal*, which, whether as theology or poetry, appears to me to stand on a far higher level than the rest. And then, too, doctrines are put into a prominence which would not justly belong to them,—touching as they do but the outer circumference of the Christian life,—even if they were true. Still less are we prepared to welcome them, when we are persuaded that they are not true, but misinterpretations of the words of Christ and his Apostles,—mainly of his own words in the Sermon on the Mount ; or are statements such as in their entirely subjective view of things would go far to render the existence of a Church with a corporate life and as a visible body impossible.

It will be seen from what has been said, that if any one turns to these authoritative writings of the Waldenses, expecting to find in them the fulness and freeness of the Pauline teaching on the propitiatory work of Christ, on the forgiveness of sin, on our justification by faith in Him, he will be disappointed. He will find the supremacy of Holy Scripture asserted as against every teaching and tradition of men ; but the prevailing type of doctrine is more that of St. James than of St. Paul. Nor is this very strange. That, as we have seen, which constituted the original heart and kernel of the Waldensian movement was not opposition to any doctrine taught in the Church of Rome, but a desire, first stirred up through the reading of the Holy Scriptures, after the highest form of Christian life and that nearest to the Apostolical

model. Only by degrees, and not until after they had been cast out, did the Waldenses discover that doctrinally also much was amiss in that body which had so violently separated them from itself. And even then it was the corruptions standing in the way of a high and holy living which called out their strongest protest. Indulgences, Purgatory,—and this in the face of God's own Word, 'In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be,'—it was these and similar abuses, abating as they did the moral earnestness wherewith men should work out their salvation, which aroused their most indignant remonstrance. But for the setting forth of what are called by pre-eminence the doctrines of grace, there are Doctors of the mediæval Church who very much surpass them. St. Anselm and St. Bernard may have built on the one Foundation some 'wood, hay and stubble' such as the simpler dissidents of the Alps would not have been tempted to employ; but, taking those two at their best and highest, there utters itself in them a trust in Christ and in Christ's merits alone, a passionate cry of the sinner for grace and for nothing else but grace which coming from the heart reaches to the heart, such as I cannot say that I have found in all the writings of those with whom we are now concerned.

And yet marvellous indeed is the sustaining, quickening, binding power of the Word of God. With a complex of doctrine theologically incomplete; having only imperfectly extricated themselves from errors which had in the lapse of centuries overgrown the Church; and even where they got rid of Roman error not always having seized with firm hand the truth whereof this was the caricature or the denial; they yet lived on from age to age, a light in a dark place. They lived on too, which from one point of view is the more to their honour,

without having produced, so far as we know, a single theological genius or other preeminent leader of their own. The Friends of God could boast their Nicolas of Basle; the pantheistic Mystics could claim an Amalrich of Bena, and one half of an Eckart; the apocalyptic enthusiasts their Joachim of Floris; the Moravian Brethren their Luke of Prague; the Brethren of the Common Life their Gerhard Groot; other religious bodies too had their single spokesman and champion, who stood high above the crowd;—but no one stands out a predominant spirit among these: they hold the championship of that truth which was given them to keep in common; the honour of guarding it is shared alike among them all.

Let me note, before we part company with the Waldenses,—for I cannot pursue their history further,—that the Reformation brought no remission of their trials, but rather an aggravation of them. As the result of a closer assimilation of their teaching to that of the German and Swiss Reformers, their doctrinal antagonism to the Church of Rome, and hers to them, became sharper and more defined than before it had been; while, planted as they were in the very heart of the countries which had put back the Reformation and still remained constant to the Roman Obedience, remote from brethren of their own faith, they were in their isolation as sheep among wolves. In Calabria some small Waldensian communities were hunted down as wild beasts (1560); while in their more northern seats they were exposed again and again to persecution and outrage, now from the French Kings, oftener from the Dukes of Savoy, sometimes from other neighbouring princes who would fain share in the privilege of dipping their hands in the blood of God's saints. There are cruelties which it is an unspeakable horror even to read of, and which none should read of unless

compelled by necessity ; and some which from time to time the Waldenses endured are of the number of these. It was one of the most devilish of such persecutions, that of 1655, which called forth the noble remonstrance of Cromwell, and the cry to heaven of Milton—

‘Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,’

to which I have referred already.

But they lived through all ; downtrodden, yet not wholly crushed ; as the Bush ever burning, and yet never quite consumed. And now a serener hour has succeeded, and the temptations which threaten them in the present are not those which threatened them in the times that are past. We will not renounce a hope that this *ecclesiola pressa*, this little Church in the wilderness, may have been kept for great things ; may yet play a part, and an important one, in the recovering of Italy to a living faith in God and in the Gospel of his Son. Thrown as the missionary activity of its members mainly is upon the Italian side of the Alps, let us hope that they will not be content with detaching and drawing out one here and one there from the national communion, so discrediting and disintegrating the only Church which the great majority of Italians will ever know or accept ; let us hope they will at least make the experiment, whether that whole Italian Church may not be led to move as one body in the way of reformation : and this a Reformation not borrowed in the gross from the South German or Swiss Reformers of the sixteenth century ; but such a reformation rather as a closer study of Scripture, a nearer acquaintance with antiquity as it really was, and a due consideration of their own historic, moral, and religious evolution in the past, shall commend to them. And this

may be, if only they will lay to heart how easy it is to throw down, how hard to build up ; that an actual house to shelter us, although it may not be all which we desire, is yet a blessing not lightly to be cast away, even though a building much more to our liking may rise up before our mental vision ; but one existing at present, and likely to exist for long, only in imagination and hope ; perhaps never destined in any other shape to exist at all.



## LECTURE XVIII.

*THE SCHOOLMEN AND THE MENDICANTS.*

THE first period of the Scholastic Theology may be said to have closed with the condemnation of Abélard. The second period has features of its own. The works of Aristotle have become far better known in the West than they were in the century preceding. Many of these, hitherto inaccessible, have been rendered into Latin, some from the Greek, some at second hand from Arabic translations. For these last men had mainly to thank the Crusades; but some also had found their way from Spain. The partial ban of the Church under which Aristotle lay for a time has been taken off. And now men run into an opposite extreme; they refer to him as 'the Philosopher,' without counting it necessary to name him, just as Homer is 'the Poet' for Greek commentators and scholiasts. 'Master of those who know,' he is regarded in the light of a supplementary Apostle, whom the heathen world has contributed as a complement to the Twelve; or as a forerunner of Christ in the kingdom of nature, very much in the same way as was afterwards John the Baptist in the kingdom of grace. A citation from him on some ethical question is not less effectual to close a debate and decide a question than one drawn from Holy Writ. But with all this his influence tells more on the form than on the spirit; which is not to be wondered at, when we keep in mind that it was not his

ethical writings, but his logical, which mainly ruled the Middle Ages.

Under the shaping power of these last the dialectic method predominates more and more. Every statement which can assume a syllogistic form is compelled to assume one. Christian truth may be the gold, but it is the Stagyrite who furnishes the crucible into which the precious metal is poured, and which imparts to it its mould and shape. The second manner of the Schoolmen, it is true, was involved in the first; but they had not hitherto claimed the whole region of theology as their own; nor insisted, as now they do, that not merely this question or that, as it emerges for discussion and debate, but every question, actual or imaginable, should pass through their mill, and submit itself to the conditions of treatment by them imposed. Jealousy on the part of the hierarchy, which at first had stood in their way, has now disappeared. Scholasticism on the one side, warned by the fate of Abélard, is itself more cautious than when it first tried its powers; recognizes the limits which it must not seek to overpass. The Church upon the other, conscious that it cannot dispense with this, the master-passion and the master-science of the time, and reassured that it has here an ally and not a covert foe, has become more tolerant.

I mentioned to you in a former Lecture how the Mendicants, who were very far from inheriting St. Francis' contempt for all books except the book of God and the book of nature, had forced their way, in face of the most strenuous resistance from those already in possession, into some of the most important chairs in the chief Universities of Europe; or had founded additional chairs of their own. The University of highest name, I

mean that of Paris, was the first which they took by storm (1230); Oxford, next to Paris in reputation, surrendered before long; indeed some accounts would bring the Franciscans to Oxford some four years earlier than the date just named. Nor can it be denied that their appearance on the scene gave a new impulse to all academical studies, to those of theology and philosophy above all. From the first they so made the chief problems which were occupying the minds of men their own, that for nearly two centuries it would be impossible so much as to attempt to tell the story of the Friars without telling that of theology as well; or, conversely, that of theology without telling also theirs, so inextricably intertwined and bound up are they with one another.

The Franciscans and Dominicans, owning a certain solidarity of interest, so long as they were maintaining a common cause against the older monastic and academical foundations, were not the less divided against each other; and, the battle against those older being won, the rivalry between themselves which had hitherto displayed itself in a narrower and more personal sphere, now expanded in a larger and a theological. Of this rivalry I have spoken a little already, but not in its influence on theology. It was soon found that wherever, within such limits as the Church allowed, there was room for a difference, if the Dominicans took one side, the Franciscans ranged themselves on the other. In the active competition for public favour which existed between the Orders, the Dominicans for a long time could boast a Doctor, to whom the Franciscans, much to their vexation, could produce no peer. This was Thomas Aquinas (b. 1228, d. 1274), son of a Count of Aquino in the kingdom of Naples, and thence having his name; the favourite pupil of Albertus Magnus, and himself probably the most

successful organizer of knowledge since Aristotle whom the world has known. His *Sum of Theology* and other works might fill us with a just amazement, had he lived and laboured man's allotted threescore years and ten. Much more are they calculated to excite our astonishment when we learn that he died with scarcely two-thirds of these years accomplished. The Franciscans indeed, who could put forward an Alexander Hales (d. 1245),—it was he who first won for his order a chair in the University of Paris,—and a John of Fidanza, better known as Bonaventura (b. 1221, d. 1274), could not have been regarded as poorly furnished with scholars or saints; but it was only in Duns Scotus (d. 1308) that they felt they had one for whom without exaggeration they might challenge an equal place to that of the illustrious Dominican. The Leibnitz of the Middle Ages found in him his Kant; a rival whom Ritter does not hesitate to characterize as 'without doubt the acutest and most penetrating spirit of the Middle Ages.' Still younger than Aquinas, he was only thirty-four years old when he died.

From this time forward, Thomists or followers of Thomas, which all Dominicans were, and Scotists, or followers of Scotus, as were all Franciscans, divide men's suffrages between them; the few active theologians who remained outside of the two Orders attaching themselves theologically to the one School of doctrine or the other. There were serious differences between them, but nearly always to the advantage of the Thomists. Thus their teaching in the matter of the Atonement was not, it is true, all which Anselm's had been; but it did not consciously depart from this:—they too taught that the offering of Himself by the Son of God was a 'satisfaction' in the strictest sense of the word; as such entitling Him to claim as a right the forgiveness of them on whose

behalf that offering was made and accepted, and the only satisfaction which could anywhere have been found ; indispensable therefore, if sin was to be forgiven ; and drawing after it not by arbitrary decree but by moral necessity the acceptance of those on whose behalf the offering was made. Not so the Scotists. The relation of Christ's propitiatory death to the sin of man, they taught, was an arbitrary and constituted one. God was pleased by a gratuitous arrangement on his part to accept this particular sacrifice as an equivalent for the sins of mankind. He might have accepted any other substitute, or He might have dispensed with demanding any substitute at all. How near to Socinianism pure and simple they were here it is not difficult to see. What the Son of God did, an Angel, even a holy man, might, if God had so willed it, and He was free they said to will it, have accomplished the same. The omnipotence of God might appear to be honoured by such teaching ; but at the expense of what is infinitely more precious, his justice.

In the matter of grace and merit, of the relation in which God's grace and man's deservings stand to one another, the Thomists, professing herein to follow the teaching of St. Augustine, have again the advantage. It must be owned that their doctrine concerning grace and the freedom of grace lacks much of the fulness and freedom of his from whom they professed to have learned it. Still their teaching here is far nearer to this and to the truth than is the semi-pelagianism of the Scotists.

Then too the Dominicans were content to forfeit no little popularity by their resistance to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary ;—practically the excepting of her out of the number of those for whom Christ died. Among the 'glories of Mary' this, if only it had been true, would have been the

chiefest,—to wit, that she, no less than her Divine Son, had been from the remotest beginnings of her life exempt from any share in that transmitted fault of our nature which is the portion of all other children of Adam. Up to the middle of the twelfth century no teacher of eminence had accepted this doctrine ; many, as St. Anselm and St. Bernard, had expressly condemned it, as contrary to Scripture, to the Church's use, to tradition, to reason. But it was popular, and growing in popularity ; moreover, was it not written, 'Thou art all fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee ?' and from the time that Duns Scotus, always well pleased to find himself in opposition to Aquinas, made it his own, it became a distinctive note of the Scotists ; all those who opposed having the offensive nickname of 'Maculists' fastened upon them, affixing, as that name implied they did, a spot or stain (*macula*) on her whom God had created spotless. Before quitting this subject, I will call your attention to the many reforming spirits who, strangely enough, sprung up from the ranks of the Dominicans ; not a few of these perishing by the sentence of that very tribunal over which their own Order presided—Savonarola constituting the foremost figure among these. The Franciscan Order had its martyrs too, and, I should imagine, more numerous still ; but these for the most part rather martyrs to the doctrine of St. Francis than martyrs to the doctrine of Christ.

But in addition to the theological, there were philosophical antagonisms between the Schoolmen ; I refer mainly to the grand dispute in respect of the real or only the assumed existence of ideas which divided them into two opposite camps—that of the Nominalists and that of the Realists ; the lines which divide these from one another, let me note by the way, being not coincident

with those which divide Thomists and Scotists; in fact, Aquinas and Duns Scôtus were both Realists, though the former the most pronounced. I feel how extremely difficult, nay how impossible is any popular treatment of the subject upon whose threshold we now stand; the absolute necessity under which I shall lie, of carrying you into regions in which your senses will in all likelihood prove more or less unexercised. As you listen you will perhaps say within yourselves, What have speculations such as these, philosophical and not theological, to do with that subject which engages us now? Yet in truth I could not avoid the subject if I would. The controversy between Nominalists and Realists, philosophical at the beginning, and inherited from the Schools of ancient Greece, mixed itself up before long with all the theological controversies of the Middle Ages; it found its way into discussions, where at the outset it must have seemed merely a stranger and an intruder; but in which it presently vindicated its right to take a part and to count itself at home. Nominalism and Realism are severally the banners under one or other of which all the illustrious thinkers of those Ages rallied; and there could be no idler attempt than the attempt to trace the course of the Scholastic Theology, or indeed to trace the thought of the Middle Ages at all, without reference to these. Add to this that the controversy is not a dead thing, belonging to a dead past. Rather is it one of those imperishable controversies which seem to renew themselves with every new change which passes over the world of thought. Whether we may be aware of the fact or not, we have not escaped, as neither will those who come after us escape, from it. We are every one of us continually taking, whether we know it or not, one side or the other,

implicitly avouching ourselves Nominalists or Realists, as the case may be.

What then was this grand dispute, which, seeming so remote from the practical life of men, yet, strangely enough, was able for centuries to fill the Schools with its tumult; which, claiming the loftiest intellects and their service, compelled these to range themselves on the one side or the other? It concerned itself, I may say generally, with names and with things; with things, that is, as they are gathered and grouped under common names on the ground of qualities which they all have in common. To these 'universals,' for such in technical language these comprehensive generic names were called, the Nominalist refused to attribute any substantial existence. He regarded them as mere abstractions, fictions, the breath of men's mouths, and no more. Only the individual had any proper existence for him. Generic terms might be useful mental implements, enabling the mind to grasp in some sort of unity the multiplicity of things; but this was their whole worth. All true knowledge was in his esteem the result of experience. Universals for him were names and nothing more; Nominalist therefore he was fitly called.

Not so the Realist. For him these universals corresponded very nearly to the ideas in the philosophy of Plato. They were not merely an imaginative framework which each man fills up with the results of his own experience; but, so to speak, archetypal patterns, according to which the individual things, which are only weak 'shadows of the true,' are subsequently fashioned. Thus 'man' is before 'men,' not 'men' before 'man.' Universals for him are realities, and the only realities; and Realist is therefore the name which he bears. As a help to memory, take the following, which was



a favourite summing up at the time of the several positions occupied by the several disputants: *Universalia post rem* was the position of the Nominalist; *Universalia ante rem* was that of the Realist; these last sometimes advancing so far to meet their opponents as to admit this statement, *Universalia in re*, which was the reconciling *via media* of the Aristotelians; even as Aquinas claimed for universals no more than an immaterial existence.

An example will often help us to understand what would have been nearly unintelligible without it. Here is the word 'righteousness,' with the notion which I have framed for myself as connoted by this word. Do the various righteous acts that have come within my ken give me this my notion of righteousness;—a notion which I have abstracted from all these, combining them anew in my own mind; and one which would have been inconceivable except by their aid? Or, on the other hand, is the idea of righteousness, for me and for every man, anterior to these several righteous acts,—not borrowed or derived from them, but only recognized as finding a partial embodiment and fulfilment in each of them; an idea which would equally have been, would have had its own independent subsistence, whether these acts, or any other like these, had ever been wrought or not? If I say the first, I am a Nominalist, and for me universals are subsequent to particulars,—have in fact no real existence whatever, however they may help me to sum up scattered and isolated phenomena under general heads. If I say the second, I am a Realist, and affirm that universals are anterior to particulars, are, so to speak, the permanent abiding moulds in which these are cast.

You will, I am confident, by this time have perceived that the strife is not altogether one about words, that very important issues may here come into debate.

A Nominalist need not be a materialist ; though this and other charges, as tritheist, atheist, were freely laid against him, as necessary consequences of what he held ; but a Realist cannot be a materialist, seeing that, if there be an anterior independent world of thoughts or archetypal ideas, there must be a Thinker, who can be no other than God. The Church could scarcely burn a man for being a Nominalist, but it long regarded such with a suspicion not very wonderful. Almost all the more earnest devotion was on the side of the Realists ; while, starting from the Nominalist's position, did it not inevitably follow that all invisible things, all that had not some sensible counterparts, were mere creations or forms of the intellect, modes of thinking ? The disfavour with which the Church regarded the Nominalists, not to speak of the shattering defeat which Anselm inflicted on Roscelin, one of their earliest and most thoroughgoing champions (1092), so told against them that for a long time they hardly ventured to show signs of life. But they were not dead. Before the coming of the end a man of rare genius arose, our English Occam, a Franciscan friar, and in many ways a forerunner of Locke ; who, taking advantage of the excesses into which the Realists, so long undisputed masters of the field, had run, found in a Nominalism by him revived, and with its weak points strengthened, engines for the assailing of the Church's teaching, such as needed only to be advanced a little further, and not the human outworks merely of the heavenly Temple, but the Sanctuary itself, would have come within the range of his assaults.

One of the most serious mischiefs attending the prevalence of the scholastic method was the extent to which it threw into the background the devotional study of Holy Scripture, and indeed this study altogether. Those

texts by which a position of the Church might be defended, or a position of gainsayers and opposers assailed, were familiar enough ; they were to be found in the manuals which were in all hands ; but the complaint rose early on the part of the Biblicists,—for there were some who now obtained this honourable title,—that even those who made theology their study, less and less betook themselves to the divine fountains of knowledge ; that Scripture itself was more and more neglected. And the charge, though often in modern times repeated with not a little exaggeration, had its truth. Manuals of theology, some of them first-rate in their kind, did yet by their method, and even by the very merits which they possessed, abate men's study of that one Book for which all others in the world are no substitute and no compensation. Such was that famous Manual which had Peter Lombard (d. 1164) for its author ;—his 'widow's mite,' as he calls it, cast into the treasury of the Church ; and which for nearly three centuries authoritatively dominated the Schools, almost every Doctor adopting it as the text-book on which he lectured. This unpretending volume is a selection of proofs of the Church's doctrine drawn from the Fathers, mainly from St. Augustine, and from Holy Scripture ; the citations, which for the most part are very brief, being pieced together by this 'Master of Sentences' with admirable skill, and with an endeavour every where visible not to restrict liberty of thought more than a due submission to the Church's scheme of doctrine absolutely required ; to leave as large a range of subjects open to free discussion as possible. Students of theology, who found, or believed that they found, here or in other similar handbooks, all which was necessary for the establishing of the faith, came less and less to search the Scripture for themselves. It was possible, and not un-

common, to be a very famous Doctor, and at the same time a very sorry Scripturist indeed. Affecting for themselves or receiving from their admirers titles of honour, one was *sublimis*, another *invincibilis*, a third *irrefragabilis*, a fourth *illuminatus*, and so on, each having his own blazon; but who among them would have cared for the blazon, *Doctor planus et utilis*—which indeed was not borne away by a Schoolman at all, but by one rather, of whom somewhat later it was said, that if he had not played, Luther would not have danced (*Si Lyra non lyrâsset, Lutherus non saltâsset*)?

None who are capable of judging will deny that the Scholastic Philosophy had rendered essential service in its day. For minds that had lain torpid during a long and dreary night, it had approved itself a healthy gymnastic, an intellectual exercise which they could not without serious injury have gone without. One important province of Christian Apology it had occupied and made its own, as none before or since have done. And yet, despite of all this, whatever was soundest and best in the mind and heart of Western Christendom desired, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, nothing so much as to be rid of it wholly. Nor is it hard to understand this mingled hatred and contempt,—for we can employ no softer words,—wherewith they regarded this the darling study of the ages preceding, and the diggers who obstinately persisted in working mines, in which if gold had once been found, little now save rubbish remained. The true-hearted in every land were yearning more and more after a Reformation of the Church in its head and in its members. But the Schoolmen were not Reformers; they were, and always had been, defenders of that which was. Every attempt to revive the higher life of the Church, to abate mischiefs which were impeding, which had gone

far to strangle this life, found the most resolute opposition from them. I ventured to call them in a former Lecture the Knights Errant of the Medieval Theology, holding the lists against all comers. This, which at one time and contemplated from one point of view had been their glory, now discredited, and justly discredited them the most. There was nothing which, if it formed part of the Church's accepted system, they had not at all times shown themselves ready to defend;—the most baseless pretensions, the grossest superstition, the abuse that was the mushroom growth of yesterday equally with the truth that had been once delivered to the saints. The withdrawal of the Cup from the laity; Transubstantiation; simony, if practised by a Pope; Purgatory; Indulgences; the burning of heretics; and what not besides,—abusing their dialectic dexterity, they found reasons, and, in some sort of fashion, Scripture for all. With all their questioning, with all their affectation of independence, they never questioned any point, small or great, which the Church had determined; or only questioned with a foregone purpose of setting it on a securer basis than ever, rearing some new buttress with which to strengthen it; for their fortunes, and the fortunes of the Church as it was, they felt to be bound up together, and that the overthrow of either would be the overthrow of both.

Scholasticism, very living once, was little better now than a mummy. Let us follow it to its grave. In the latter half of the fourteenth century the life had well-nigh gone out of it, but it lingered on through the larger part of the century following; Gabriel Biel, who died in 1495, being the latest Schoolman of any name or reputation. It was now almost wholly occupied with questions generally idle and unprofitable, often absurd and profane; the green pastures of Scripture being more and more

deserted for arid and dreary wastes, where there was nothing to refresh, nothing to feed the soul. Preaching with a view of showing off, for an ostentatious display of the real or imagined learning or subtilty, the cleverness in one shape or another of the preacher, is a mischief common to all ages, and will only disappear when vain-glory and self-conceit disappear; but the complaints against the School-divines in the days of their decline, that they sought in nothing the profit of their hearers, but only their own glory, that for bread of life they only gave them stones, are so loud and of such persistent iteration, as makes it difficult not to think that it was a vice which for some cause or another had assumed at that time a more than ordinary prominence. The old controversy about 'universals' had long been picked to the bone; but the wrangle over the skeleton went forward still. It was in vain that devout men like Gerson sought to recal this theology to nobler functions; to ally it, if possible, with the Mystic Theology, and thus to put some life and warmth into it anew. But it would take no new impressions; and all attempts to correct served only to lay barer its faults, to augment its discredit, and to hasten its fall.

Meanwhile the progress of the Renaissance, the renewed acquaintance with those forms and models of perfect beauty which classical literature so freely furnished, brought into ever stronger contrast all of harsh, rugged, and repulsive which was in the form of these scholastic speculations: while beyond the form there was now next to nothing; or if something, that something utterly estranged from the actual life of men, and of no practical use or worth whatsoever. The New Learning which offered itself as a rival candidate for the homage and affections of men was in due time to reveal dangers of its own, and dangers the most serious. Of these I propose

hereafter to speak ; but it is easy to perceive how fair and attractive this New Learning must have showed, with all its human interests, and holding as it did the keys which opened into a wonder-world of grace and harmony and beauty, as set beside the harsh, outworn and old which was all that the Schoolmen had to offer.

If we wish to measure the depth of the contempt into which these sophists of our modern world had fallen, and what was the feeling of learned Germany about them, the *Life of Ulrich von Hutten* (b. 1488, d. 1523) and the story of the so-called *Letters of Obscure Men* (1516) will tell us something about this ; while Luther, a little later, can hardly name Aristotle,—whom he justly regarded as the father and prince of the Schoolmen,—otherwise than as ‘that arch-scoundrel Aristotle’ (*sceleratissimus ille nebulo Aristoteles*) ; although destined somewhat later to discover that it was impossible wholly to do without the great artificer of method, whose work as such could never pass away. Would we understand in what esteem the Schoolmen were held in England, we may obtain a glimpse of this from a little fact,—namely that about this same time Duns Scotus, of whom you heard just now, the *Doctor Subtilis* of the later Schools, ‘the wittiest of the school-divines,’ as Hooker calls him, contributed the word ‘dunce’ to the English language. To avouch oneself a follower of Duns, ‘a Duns-man,’ was equivalent to being oneself numbered among the dunces. There is a strange irony in such a close to an intellectual movement like that which we have just been describing.

## LECTURE XIX.

*THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY.*

THE Papacy maintained itself for the better part of a century at those proud heights to which Innocent III., unfolding to the full all which was logically contained in the Hildebrandine idea, had raised it. To this period belongs, as we have seen, the triumphant close of the struggle with the Empire ; nor were there wanting during this time occupants of the Papal Chair, who, accepting the legacy of greatness bequeathed to them, showed themselves equal to the keeping what others greater than themselves had won. But for all this, that wondrous fabric which had been reared to such marvellous heights was not altogether so strong as it appeared. Already there were forces at work for its overthrow ; these, as is almost the universal rule, escaping the notice of all save a very few, and only some sudden catastrophe at last revealing how effectual their operation had been ; for it is not ' with observation ' that kingdoms, either of this world or of the other, rise or fall, come or go.

Let me name some elements of weakness which were secretly undermining that which betrayed to the common eye no tokens of failing strength. And first, the edifice which those daring architects had planned paid the penalty which in this world is found sooner or later to wait upon all over-greatness. It is not material buildings alone that may be reared too high for safety, that in the



extravagance of the heights which they reach, contain the pledge and prophecy of their own downfall. The vastness of this spiritual dominion, the absence from it of law and limitation, in which, after all, true and abiding strength resides, threatened its continuance, and were as a promise of its doom. There is perhaps no voice out of the Middle Ages which at all helps us to realize what this over-greatness was, to be compared with a treatise, moderate enough in bulk,—*On Self-Consideration* is the name it bears,—which has St. Bernard for its author. Pope Eugenius III., to whom it is addressed, had been Bernard's scholar at Clairvaux, and to his influence mainly owed his elevation to the Papal throne. These were facts which neither of them could forget; and certainly the admonisher uses toward the admonished, the Abbot toward the Pope, all plainness of speech, warning him against the dangers and temptations which beset that perilous and dizzy eminence to which he had been exalted. It is a picture full of terror, though drawn by a friend, of what it was to be Pope; a tracing by the hand of a master in the heavenly life, of the subtle influences, not from one side only but from all, which were evermore insidiously at work for the moral secularization,—we have no word in English corresponding to the German 'Verweltlichung,'—of the man who, as standing at the centre of the spiritual life of Christendom, should himself have been found the most spiritual of all; but who, exposed to these influences, was likely before long to occupy a very different room.

Among the forces dangerous to the Roman supremacy which were beginning to make themselves felt, we must assign a very foremost place to the growth of nationalities, the waking up, as from a long winter sleep, of one nation after another to a consciousness that it was not a

mere limb of the Papacy, but a nation, with the possibilities of an independent national life of its own,—bound to follow after and unfold this proper life, if it would attain the measure of its appointed greatness, and fulfil the part allotted to it, in the grand scheme of God's providence. The policy of Rome had tended to the repressing and in the end the crushing of all which was individual and distinctive in the life of the separate nations of the European family, to a bringing of them all to one uniformity of level. Where they had a liturgic use of their own, she was not content till she had wrested it from them; or, if under strong pressure she grudgingly allowed it, this was only for a time, the permission being presently narrowed, and at the first favourable opportunity withdrawn. So fared it, for example, with the Gothic rite in Spain, with the Slavonic in the East of Europe. There was never upon her part any hearty and loving acceptance of the differences which individualize the nations of Europe, and make them as many members, each with its own office, of one and the same body. It was this awakened national feeling in France that enabled Philip the Fair to fight a winning battle with Boniface VIII., of which presently. It was the growth of the same national feeling in England, which animated Edward III. and his Parliament and people in their resistance to Papal aggressions and exactions, and dictated that whole course of bold legislation which made his reign so memorable an epoch in the constitutional history of our land. Of this too hereafter I hope to speak something more.

With this quickening of national life, and indeed as <sup>it</sup> at once a cause of it and an effect, there went the discovery, that not the Latin only, but also the newly-formed languages of Europe were vessels capable of containing the precious wine of God's truth, with all other

thoughts which were worth the thinking and preserving. Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, the swan-like dirge of the dying and departing Middle Ages,—for such in one aspect it is, if in another the joyous greeting of a new and a better time, had most gloriously attested this. No one henceforward could affect to despise the tongue, vulgar or popular as it might be called, in which thoughts and imaginations such as his had been enshrined. Assuredly it was no trivial gain that the dominion of Latin, as the exclusive language of the Church, of literature, of learning, should thus be drawing to an end. A sure sign and token was here that much else was drawing to an end as well.

And then too, important moral supports were slipping away from the Papacy; and not the less surely, that there was no open proclamation that they were thus vanishing away. The enthusiasm for the Crusades, and for the Pope as the conductor of these, was waning, had well-nigh wholly waned. He could no longer send some Prince whose absence he desired, upon a distant and dangerous enterprise, from which it was at least possible that he might never return; nor could he use an absence thus brought about for purposes of his own. As little could a Pope now make acceptance and fulfilment of the crusader's vow the condition of reconciliation with the Church, as Innocent III. had done in the case of Raymond of Toulouse; or treat one who, having assumed the cross, should afterwards evade or repudiate the obligation, as having drawn back to perdition,—as Gregory IX. treated the Emperor Frederick II. Neither now did the vast sums of money raised to defray the expenses of these costly expeditions, sums with the employment of which men were very ill satisfied, pass through his hands or accumulate in his treasury any more. More serious

default even than this, a Pope had no longer armies at his disposal, which, got together for one purpose, namely for the winning back of the Holy Sepulchre, he could launch on whatever by-service he pleased; qualifying as a Crusade, and therefore as the fulfilment of the crusader's vow, a war waged at his bidding against any whom he was pleased to denounce as enemies of the Church.

In summing up the story of the struggle of Popes and Hohenstaufens, I observed in passing that the Papacy, triumphant as it proved, yet did not come out from that struggle unscathed and unscarred. It had forfeited much love, had aroused a deep discontent by the intense pressure which it had put, probably had no choice but to put, on all, clergy and laity alike, from whom the costs of that tremendous struggle could be wrung. In the earlier battle of the Investitures the children of the Church had not grudged the sacrifices demanded of them. The humblest lay-brother could perceive what was at stake—a spiritual object and one well worth its cost. But in the later struggle, they had been often very mundane objects that came to the front. The discontent grew deeper and angrier when, the battle being won, all that had been demanded while it was raging was demanded still—with more, and more intolerable, added to it; for indeed every shameful device of times past for the extracting of money from the faithful was now pushed further than ever, a wonderfully inventive genius displayed in the imagining of new ones; while, bad as was all this, worse, as we shall see by and bye, was behind.

In the Pontificate of Boniface VIII. (1294–1303) we recognize the first unmistakable signs that the high tides which had upborne the Papacy so triumphantly thus far, had reached their highest, and were beginning to ebb.

He was exactly the man to bring about a reaction such as this. With the same boundless pretensions as his most illustrious predecessors, but without those deep moral convictions which left it possible for men to hate, but not to despise them, he put forward claims which even a Gregory VII. or an Innocent III. would, in the altered temper of the times, have found it hard to make good. That the times *were* altered was abundantly manifest; arguments in favour of Papal pretensions which passed muster once would not pass muster any more. Asserting for himself a divine authority to disinherit kings, to give away their kingdoms to others, it was no longer sufficient to appeal in proof to the words of Jeremiah, 'See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant' (i. 10). Nay, warrant sufficient for this was not to be drawn from the fact that Samuel at God's bidding transferred the kingdom of Israel of old from Saul to David (1 Sam. xvi. 1). As little did the declaration of St. Paul, 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man' (1 Cor. ii. 15), put beyond question that the Pope was supreme and irresponsible arbiter of all disputes in Christendom. Christ might have admonished Peter, 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren' (Luke xxiii. 32); yet this was not any longer accepted as a decisive Scriptural proof of the infallibility of all future Popes. He might have said concerning the two swords which the disciples had with them, 'It is enough' (Luke xxii. 38), approving these, whereas, it was argued, if He had disapproved, He would have said, 'It is too many;' but when it was further concluded from this that there were two jurisdictions in the world, the one spiritual and the other temporal, both to be wielded, the one *by* the Church, and

the other *for* the Church, there were many to whom the foundations seemed narrow and untrustworthy on which to raise so huge a superstructure. Nay, an appeal to the fact that God had set at the beginning two lights in the firmament, a greater and a lesser (Gen. i. 16), the greater, as the more light-diffusing, being a symbol of the priesthood, the lesser, with its borrowed beams, of the kingdom,—even this, which had done such excellent service in times past, to which Pope Innocent III. was never weary of appealing, was found now to have lost much of its convincing power.

It was not long before Pope Boniface found himself committed in an evil hour to a mortal quarrel with one as crafty, as proud, as rapacious as himself,—Philip the Fair (1285–1314), King of France; who now at the head of a strongly compacted monarchy had taken up the quarrel with the Papacy which the Emperors had dropt. Many differences between the two had been patched up, but this proceeded to extremities. Presently letters were exchanged between them in which all ordinary restraints and decencies of language were on both sides cast away; and in the end the famous Bull, called *Unam Sanctam* from the opening words, was published (Nov. 18, 1302). In this the ever-memorable statement occurs, ‘We declare, define, and pronounce that subjection to the Roman Pontiff is for every human being altogether of necessity for salvation.’ Philip was not terrified. Supported now as he would scarcely have been half a century earlier, by his States and by the public opinion of France, and very dexterously contriving to make the quarrel not a private but a national one, he defied the Papal excommunication, and appealed against it to a future Council and a true Pope—ominous appeal, now for the first time heard. The conflict between these two, so far as it was a personal

one, had a violent and abrupt termination ; although, had it been fairly fought out, it would have probably had the same, and the King have come out from it victorious. Boniface, surprised in his country palace at Anagni by a band of lawless soldiery led by a partisan of Philip (Sept. 7, 1303), did not survive for many weeks the shameful indignities, reaching, it is said, to personal ill-treatment, which from these he endured. Dante, who has the worst opinion of Boniface, speaks with a pitying indignation of the outrages to which the aged Pontiff was submitted.

A few words upon this Pope :—not so much for his own sake, as on account of the important part which in the Church's history he played ; and having in view the manner in which all subsequent humiliations of the Papacy are connected with this first humiliation, and links in the same chain. With it, as we shall presently see, is immediately connected the transfer of the seat of the Papacy to Avignon ; from this ill-omened transfer springs the Great Schism of the West ; from the Schism, and with a view to its healing, the Three Councils, also of the West ; while all these events effectually work together for the hastening forward of the Reformation. That Boniface was a proud, passionate man, ambitious of power, greedy of the world's wealth and honour, was the verdict of his own age, which few in after times have been disposed to reverse. A current rumour of the time, that he hastened the death of his predecessor, the pious hermit Cœlestin, having first by fraudulent devices induced him to resign, or in Dante's words,—if indeed the words have reference to Cœlestin,—‘ to make the grand refusal,’ rests on no sufficient grounds ; and is only worth repeating as an evidence of the esteem in which his contemporaries held him. Of other charges against him, as that he was

an Epicurean infidel, utterly shameless in the avowal of his unbelief, and in the practice of his vices, we hear nothing until the struggle between him and the King became a mortal one. This charge at any rate Dante could not have believed ; who reserves a place in the 'Dolorous City' for Boniface, but not in the circle to which he has assigned unbelievers and heretics.

Benedict XI., the immediate successor of Boniface, passed away in a few months,—his passage also, as some affirmed, having been 'assisted' by Philip. And now the French King contrived that the choice of the Conclave should fall on one who had so sold himself to carry out the wishes and policy of France, that he nowhere felt safe from popular indignation except on the northern side of the Alps, and under the immediate protection of him whom he had engaged to serve. After a brief residence at Bourdeaux, and then at Poitiers, Clement V. fixed his seat at Avignon, which, though not French territory, was an *enclave* on every side surrounded by this territory. There from 1309 to 1377 he and six following Popes resided. 'The Babylonish Captivity' is the name by which this voluntary exile in a foreign land, with the servile dependence on a foreign power which this exile entailed, is often designated by earnest Roman Catholic historians, and not by them only :—the name having been suggested, as I need hardly observe, by the seventy years or thereabouts during which this Exile lasted ; reminding as this did of a like number of years over which the literal Captivity of Babylon extended.

It is not hard to perceive the manifold ways in which such a self-chosen estrangement from its Italian home must have wrought injuriously for the Papacy. It was no light matter for this to be thus torn away from those roots which during the course of long ages it had



stricken in the Italian soil,—dissociated from the reminiscences and traditions, potent still, of the imperial City. Then too the Popes could no longer make plausible claim to be regarded as independent umpires and arbiters in the affairs of Christendom; for it was manifest that they had no choice but to set forward the interests and to fulfil the behests of the Monarch who sheltered them; and who, as no other, could work for them harm or good. At the same time, feeling comparatively safe in that ignoble shelter, they allowed themselves in insolences and aggressions on the rights of other princes of Christendom, upon which they would not otherwise have ventured; they advanced claims to an universal monarchy, which stood in ridiculous contrast with their own absolute dependence on the Court of France, a dependence so abject that there were times when a Pope did not venture to give away the smallest preferment without permission first obtained from the French King.

Perhaps the worst instance of this subservience was shown in the process of the Knights Templar. These, when the Holy Land was irrecoverably lost, and what had hitherto been the justification of their existence had gone with it, had withdrawn to their Preceptories in Europe; but had failed to make for themselves any new sphere of glorious toil, such as the Knights of St. John had found at Rhodes (1309) and the Teutonic Knights in Prussia (1226). How far they or any number of them were guilty of the dreadful crimes laid to their charge is a question on which impartial historians in times past have arrived at very different conclusions. It is one which divides them still, although it must be owned the acquittal of the Templars is not quite so unhesitating now as it was a century ago. Some of them, as it is hard to doubt, had not escaped the contagion of Eastern vices

and Eastern infidelity. At the same time there can be no question that their enormous wealth was their real crime in the eyes of Philip; that their trial was in most instances a frightful mockery; their execution a judicial murder; and, if the Pope was indeed the upholder of righteousness on the earth, that then, if ever, was a case for his interference. Clement V. however, after just enough of hesitation and resistance to show that he was perfectly aware of the unrighteous judgments which he was invited to connive at, or rather commanded to approve, threw the mantle of the Papal sanction over the most hateful atrocities of the French King (1307-1314). This event, let me add, beyond and beside all the importance which it bore on the surface, had another and a deeper significance, as a blow, so deadly because so dishonouring, against one of the most characteristic institutions and stateliest features of the medieval world. Plainly another and a new order of things was at hand.

It was altogether an unlovely time, as such times of transition mostly are; when the old is dying and the new not fully born;—as unlovely morally as is materially that ugly fortress-prison, called a palace, which the Popes have left behind them on the banks of the Rhone. The morals of the Court of Rome may not have always been very edifying; but those of the Court of Avignon were immeasurably worse. Petrarch, who formed one of a deputation from the city of Rome beseeching Clement VI. to return (1342), and who had other excellent opportunities of knowing, gives in his *Letters* a revolting picture of the place and of the things which were perpetrated there. It was a time also sadly wanting in traits of redeeming nobleness; a time as ignoble as it was unlovely. The struggle between the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria and John XXII., which stands out as its

leading interest (1322–1347), is but a poor reproduction of the mighty conflict between the Hohenstaufens and the Popes of their times, which had convulsed Western Christendom a century and a half before. All the grander features of the earlier struggle have vanished; the aims are meaner, the actors less heroic or not heroic at all. For the two Fredericks we have the weak and wavering Lewis; for Innocent III. and Gregory IX. we have John XXII., that ‘man of blood,’ as some named him—than whom there may have been worse and wickeder men in the Papal Chair, but scarcely one who more repels every sympathy; not to mention others better than him, but certainly possessing no title to greatness.

The deputation in which Petrarch bore a part was by no means the only one of its kind; for the Roman people or populace,—call them which you will,—fierce and fickle, ever revolting or on the brink of a revolt against a Pope when among them, could ill brook his persistent absence from them; threatening as this absence did to dry up or permanently to divert into other channels all the rich gains which in one shape or another, through the presence of the Papal Curia, had been wont to fall into their laps. It was indeed high time that the Exile should cease, if Rome, and indeed all Italy, which was daily becoming more Ghibelline and falling into a more hopeless anarchy, was not to slip away from the Papal grasp altogether; if the brief reign of a Rienzi (May 20–Dec. 15, 1347) was not to be succeeded by that of some demagogue, who should hold the reins of power with a firmer grasp than the so-called Tribune of the People had done. At length Gregory XI., after more than one baffled attempt on the part of his predecessors to find their way back to their proper centre and again to root themselves in the Italian soil, succeeded in bringing the

long Captivity—self-chosen banishment we might rather call it—to a close (1377).

As may easily be supposed, words bolder than had ever been uttered before, words striking at the very root of the Papal system, and leaving none of its prerogatives unassailed, had found utterance during this inglorious time; and, token most ominous of all, these had not come from such as stood avowedly without the Church's pale, but from within. Foremost among the threatening apparitions of the first half of the fourteenth century is a book, the *Defensor Pacis*, written by a physician and divine of Padua, Marsilio by name (d. 1328), in the immediate service of Lewis of Bavaria. No later hand has traced with a finer historic tact the mundane conditions which first rendered possible, and then so favoured and fostered the marvellous upgrowth of the Papal power; no subsequent writer has searched out with a more pitiless logic the weak places of the Papal armour. An epoch-making book Neander calls it; and certainly, for good or for evil, it was far in advance of its age: so far indeed as at once to explain why it should have exercised so little immediate influence upon its age. Purely Erastian in its manner of contemplating the relations between the Church and the State, presbyterian in its views of Church government, subjecting to a criticism often the most damaging much that hitherto had been assumed as lifted above all question,—it is an arsenal which in after times has supplied weapons to many who have little guessed from whence those weapons were drawn; who perhaps have imagined that they had found or forged them for themselves. Nor was it only from the mouth of this Paduan physician that there issued words such as these, sharper than any two-edged sword. On the same side

was ranged another, greater than he. It is, indeed, nothing strange that a Church wherein the corporate feeling was fast dying out, should have seen a revival of Nominalism under slightly altered forms ; a reassertion, that is, of the individual and of his rights ; nor yet that this revival should instinctively have assumed an attitude hostile to the Church. But of this revival, and of William of Occam, who was its soul, I have spoken already. I will only here commemorate one proud word of his, with which he saluted the Emperor, to whom he had fled for shelter from the wrath of the Church :—‘ Defend me with the sword, and I will defend thee with the pen.’ Certainly a new period was beginning when the pen could be thus regarded as a match, or more than a match, for the sword.

Against these, and as bearing the word for Rome, there were only some later Schoolmen, such as had quite lost their hold on the heart and intellect of Europe, with here and there a Papal canonist, who must have done her more harm than good by the insolent extravagance of the claims which he advanced ; as though, under cover of words bolder and bigger than ever, he would conceal from himself and from others that the realities of power were disappearing or had already disappeared. There had been a time when, if Rome fought her battle with carnal weapons, with the stake, the fagot and the dungeon, she could boast her trained champions as well, prepared to enter the lists and to maintain her cause with the weapons of the intellect no less ; and these which she wielded, weapons of a temper as fine as any which heresiarch or reformer could wield. There was a time when she was not content with merely silencing an Abélard, but sought also to confute him. It was not so any more.

## LECTURE XX.

*THE GREAT COUNCILS OF THE WEST.*

WE have seen the end of the so-called Babylonish Captivity. But dishonour and degradation worse even than this was behind ; a mischief which, directly growing out of the Captivity, should work more potently than even that had done for the stripping from the Papacy of any ideal glory with which it might still be attired. The Great Schism of the West was to follow, which, beginning where the Captivity ended, was not to be healed for some forty miserable years. It is not difficult to trace the connexion between the two. During the long residence of the Popes at Avignon a party had grown up in the Sacred College entirely devoted to the interests of France, nominees of the French King, eager to entangle the Church again in that disgraceful bondage from which not till after so many painful efforts and ignominious years it had escaped. Over against these was a smaller Italian party ; with which naturally sided all who desired to see the chief ruler of the Church restored to some sort of dignity and independence, and not any longer the creature of a foreign Monarch. Gregory XI. dying in 1378, the struggle at once began between two nations, France and Italy, for the possession of the Papacy and all the gains, moral and material, annexed to this possession ; France seeking to retain, and Italy to recover them. The French Cardinals, though far outnumbering the Italian,

did not venture to resist at Rome the election of an Italian Pope. This was Urban VI. ; and unhappily it would have been difficult anywhere to find a man more fitted by harshness, violence, and cruelty to make a small breach into a great one. It was not long before the French Cardinals, secretly withdrawing to a place of safety, declared his election void. Their lives, they said,—and this was very nearly the truth,—would not have been safe from the fury of the Roman populace had they attempted to exercise any freedom of choice. They proceeded further to elect a Pope of their own, Clement VII. (1378), who found his way back to the old haunts at Avignon, and once more established himself there.

Such were the beginnings of the Great Schism which endured for eight and thirty years, and which in its effects has endured to the present day. Never again could the Church of Rome be what before it had been. The nimbus of glory with which the early Middle Ages had encircled it, if any faint reflection of this lingered about it still, was hereby dissipated for ever. The great moral strength of the Papacy had lain in its seeming to secure unity for the Church, the Pope being at once the symbol of this unity and the pledge. It is true that there had been antipopes before. Alexander III., in the two and twenty years of his Pontificate, had triumphed over three of these. Nay, the monstrous spectacle of three Popes at the same moment had not been altogether unknown (1033). But the false had hitherto quickly succumbed before the true ; there had been no continuous and enduring Schism. It was otherwise now. The competitors both held their ground, and this very institution which was to secure the Church's unity was the prime source and spring of its discords and divisions. For little short of half a century (from 1378 to 1409) all Latin

Christendom was divided into hostile camps, and presented the ignominious spectacle of Pope and antipope, each of these anathematizing the other and all the adherents of the other. Strange indeed was the elaboration which the art of cursing had by this time attained—the strangest and saddest thing of all being that it reached its perfection exactly there where not cursing but contrariwise blessing might have been looked for the most. While salvation was believed to depend on being in communion with the rightful successor of St. Peter, no one during all this time could feel perfectly sure that he was in communion with the true Pope, and not with an antipope and an antichrist. It was quite certain that one large moiety of Christendom was in this miserable condition; for if on the side of the Pope whom Rome in after times has declared to be the true, were England and Germany and of course Italy, with Denmark and Sweden, Poland and Prussia, there were ranged on the side of the Avignonese, France and Scotland, Spain and Portugal, Savoy and Lorraine.

More sublunary, but not less real causes of angry discontent were to be found in the double burdens now imposed upon all who could be compelled to bear them. To raise sums adequate for the maintenance of one Court, with all its immense outgoings, had taxed the inventive faculty of men skilled to the utmost in all devices for the drawing of money to the Papal exchequer; and very little embarrassed with scruples while engaged in this task. But now, while the area from which supplies must be drawn had not been enlarged, there were two Courts, two Colleges of Cardinals,—occasionally three,—with all their costly machinery, to be maintained. To meet these needs there was almost nothing in heaven or on earth or under the earth, which was not set to sale; but on this



matter I shall need to speak more at large hereafter. When to all the directly spiritual distresses of the time this burden, an ever-growing one, was added, it is nothing wonderful that men sighed and cried, and asked of earth and of heaven what the end would be ; or, losing all patience and all hope, demanded whether indeed an end would ever come.

Certainly it would have never arrived through the self-denying action of those from whom the evil directly proceeded. All appeals to the rival claimants of St. Peter's throne, that they should take pity on a suffering Church, and bring the Schism to an end by a common resignation, were thrown away. It was in vain they were reminded that the Good Shepherd gives not his office only, but his life for the sheep. If one was willing, the other was not ; or if both professed their willingness, some difficulty always arose at the last moment, each suspecting or feigning to suspect a fraud or a treachery on the part of the other, and refusing to proceed any farther. And so through mire and dirt the tiara was dragged for long and shameful years, until at last the very Cardinals, with a College of whom the true Pope, whichever this might be, and the pretender were alike provided, became thoroughly ashamed of their principals, of their falsehood and greed, and, uniting together, consented in the calling of a Council.

Such indeed was the one way of escape from the fatal labyrinth in which all were entangled ;—namely that the Church, in General Council assembled, should declare itself, under Christ, the ultimate source and true centre of power ; greater than any Pope ; competent to act without him ; to judge between rival claimants of the office ; to remove therefrom, either for heresy or for any other notorious sin whereby the Church was offended,

an unworthy occupant, and to elect another in his room ; and more than this, able to take such measures for its own reformation and for the excluding of scandals in the future as the necessities of the case demanded. To the University of Paris, then at the height of its reputation, to John Gerson (b. 1363, d. 1429) its illustrious Chancellor, and to Cardinal d'Ailly (b. 1350, d. 1425) who had preceded him in the same office, belongs the honour of having laboured the most zealously and the most effectually for the healing in this way of the Church's hurt. By their writings and discourses they familiarized the minds of men with proposals which must have seemed, when first put forward, of an unparalleled audacity, and such as only fell a little short of a questioning or denying the omnipotence of God.

We enter now on the story of the three Great Councils of the West, which constitute so remarkable a close to the pre-reformation period :—assemblies so stately in appearance, so impotent in fact ; so large in their promise, so small in their performance ; and which yet, while seeming to have accomplished nothing, exercised in the times which followed an influence so penetrating and so vast. The first of these is the Council of Pisa (1409). The objects it proposed to itself were two, but these most intimately connected with one another :—the first the restoration of the peace, by a restoration of the unity, of the Church ; the second the reformation of it in head and in members ;—for this formula was now upon every body's lips as the most adequate expression of all which all good men most desired. It was an august assembly, though falling short of an auguster gathering at Constance which was so soon to follow. There came together to Pisa of the two Obediences, twenty-three Cardinals, and

either in person or by proxy some two hundred Bishops, nearly three hundred Abbots, with Doctors of theology and of the Canon and the Civil law little short of five hundred ; the representatives also of temporal princes and potentates were not wanting. The great Parisian Doctors whom I named but now, as they had contributed the most to the assembling of the Council, so were they now its inspiring soul.

In the fact of thus coming together of its own authority, the Council had virtually declared that it was itself the legitimate seat of highest power in the Church ; but this did not prevent it from proclaiming the same, and its own authentic and ecumenical character, in a yet more formal manner. And now, this first step taken, the rival pretenders to the Papal throne, Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., were summoned to appear in person or by proxy before it. There was no reply, for both alike repudiated the Council's authority. Hereupon their several processes at once began ; and both, as notorious schismatics, heretics, perjurers, were set and with no little ignominy aside ; for there was no attempt to make easy their fall ; and the Chair, to which by their crimes they had alike forfeited any claim, was declared to be vacant.

But this done, the Council committed the capital mistake of electing at once another Pope, Alexander V., instead of proceeding first in the task of reformation, and only crowning the edifice when that task had been completed. At once a rallying point and a nucleus was given, around which might gather all the hostilities to reform, and they were many, which were covertly at work in the Council : for whom would a genuine reform so cut to the quick, whose wings would it so effectually clip as the Pope's ? Unless he had been a man of rare magnanimity—which Alexander, who to weakness of character added the

weakness of age, for he already bore the burden of seventy years, was not,—his one object, as the more far-seeing urged, would be to get rid of the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. And exactly this which was foreseen arrived. Having announced his intention to redress a few of the worst and most crying abuses of his own immediate Court, Alexander presently declared that it was impossible to proceed further with business, so thinned had the Council been by the departure of many among its principal members; that he therefore adjourned it for three years, when it should meet again, and complete the work so happily begun. The Council had lasted in the whole a little more than four months; from March 25 to August 7, 1409.

Such was the lame and futile conclusion of this first attempt to assert some other liberties in the Church besides the liberty of one person in it to do therein what he pleased. In some respects it left matters worse than it found them; for as neither of the deposed Popes acquiesced in his sentence of deposition, and as each had a certain following still, the immediate result was that instead of two Popes there now were three; and that which should have been the Church of God, a three-headed monster, a Cerberus, as men did not fail to call it. And now all slipped back again into its old tracks, into these or worse. And thus, when Alexander, the chosen of Pisa, died in less than a year after his election (1410), the College of Cardinals, bribed or terrified, or both, chose a man for his successor than whom it would have been difficult in all Christendom to select an abler or a worse. This was Balthazar Cossa, better known as John XXIII., and among the Popes the last of this name; none, I suppose, after him caring to assume a name which he had associated with such infamies.

That a man steeped in crime as was this man,—‘incarnate devil,’ as men called him,—should of his own free will summon a Council, or in any way come to the light that his deeds might be made manifest of what character they were, must have seemed the most unlikely thing of all. And yet to this he was driven; for, having stirred up enemies so mighty and so bent on his harm that he had no choice but to seek protection from Sigismund, the Emperor Elect, this protection was only accorded to him on one condition—namely that he should proceed to fulfil the pledge and promise, now two years overdue, of his predecessors. With many misgivings, which the issue abundantly justified, John consented; these misgivings deepening into serious alarms when it was further insisted that not in Italy, with its crowd of servile Bishops outnumbering those of all the rest of Latin Christendom put together, and on whom he might in any case rely, but somewhere beyond the Alps, this Council should be held.

The Council of Pisa had been a remarkable assembly, but this of Constance (1414–1418) very far surpassed it, as it was destined to surpass any which should follow, in the number and dignity of those who assisted at it. Need I remind you of the principal events by which it was signalized? They are so much better known than the incidents either of Pisa or of Basle that, here at least, I shall be content with their briefest recapitulation. The objects which the Council proposed to itself were three:—the first, to bring the Schism to an end; the second, to pass a judgment on the doctrines of Wiclif and Hus; and the third, to carry out that same reform, a reform of the Church in head and in members, which for all that were true of heart had been long the dearest object of their desire; and which a mournful experience had not

yet taught them was never through a Council to be obtained.

For the first of these objects, and so far as that wicked man was concerned who desecrated the highest office in the Church by his tenure of it, the difficulty in getting rid of him was overcome more easily than could have been hoped. Accused of crimes strange for their multitude and enormity, and not daring to face an investigation, he resigns. For the second, the Wiclifite doctrines are condemned ; Hus and Jerome of Prague and the bones of Wiclif are burnt : but the Church affairs of Bohemia will demand to be treated by themselves, and to them I shall devote a separate Lecture. For the third, despite of past experience and of warnings the most solemn, the former blunder is again committed. A Church without a Pope is to many as a hive without a queen-bee. Even a Gerson's courage fails him here ; and thus, before the Council addresses itself to the task of reformation, a Pope is again elected. Martin V., of the house of Colonna, on whom the choice lighted, was of learning sufficient, and of character irreproachable, an angel of light as compared with his predecessor. But the old story does not the less surely repeat itself again. The glory of the Council pales before the superior glory of a Pope, the first unchallenged one for more than half a century. But he too hates to be reformed ; shows himself so fully resolved not to be reformed, that, even before the Council has broken up, there is already a revival, and under his direct authority, of some of the wrongs and abuses against which the Church had the most indignantly protested.

He has indeed only one aim, namely how to bear the Council in hand till a decent opportunity for getting rid of it shall arrive. He very skilfully breaks up the ranks of the reformers, treating separately with the several

nations, and entering into separate Concordats with each. With fair words and promises, which even if kept would have profited little or nothing, he dissolves the assembly. When on May 16, 1418, he left the city which this Council has made famous for ever,—his bridle held on one side by the Emperor, on the other by the Elector of Brandenburg, a train of forty thousand persons, as we are told, accompanying him on horseback upon the first stage of his journey home,—it may well have seemed to him and to many that the Papacy had triumphantly extricated itself from the dangers which at one time threatened to reduce it almost to a shadow; that the wounds of the Babylonish Captivity and the Great Schism at length were healed. It was, indeed, wonderful that there should be any future for an institution which had gone through all the degradation which this had gone through. But the future could never be as the past had been. There are wounds, wounds above all in the reputation, which without being deadly, yet never heal; or, if they offer a superficial semblance of healing, leave a lasting weakness behind them.

I must hasten to the last of the Councils. The Papacy had come forth so little scathed from the perils wherewith at one time these assemblies menaced it, that a Council was no longer that word of terror which a little before it had been. There were many motives for summoning another, if indeed any help was to be found in them. No one could affirm that the restoration of sound discipline, the reformation of the Church in head and in members, had hitherto more than begun. Bohemia, wrapt in the flames of the Hussite War, was scorchiug her neighbours with fiercer fires than those by which she herself was consumed. The termination of the Greek revolt, by the submission, that is, of the Greeks, was not yet confessed

to be hopeless, and favourable opportunities which the time seemed to offer invited to a new attempt. And thus, in compliance with the rule laid down at the Council of Constance,—for even at Rome they did not dare as yet openly to set at nought its authority,—Pope Eugenius IV. called a third Council together, that namely of Basle, which was to drag out its existence for nearly twenty years (1431–1449).

Of those who sincerely mourned over the Church's ills, the larger number, after the unhappy experience of the two preceding Councils, had so completely lost all faith in these assemblies that slight regard was at first yielded to the summons; and this Council seemed likely to expire in its cradle as so many had done before, as not a few should do after. It outlived, however, these the perils of its infancy. The number, it is true, of Bishops and high Church dignitaries who attended it was never very large. A democratic element made itself felt throughout all its deliberations; a certain readiness to resort to measures of a revolutionary violence, such as renders it impossible to say that it had not itself in good part to blame for the failure which attended it. At the first, indeed, it displayed unlooked-for capacities for work, entering into important negotiations with the Hussites for their return to the bosom of the Church; and showing that it meant something more than merely to register Papal decrees; till the Pope, alarmed at these tokens of independent activity, did not conceal his ill-will, but made all means in his power to dissolve the Council. This meanwhile, growing in strength and in self-confidence, re-affirmed all of strongest which had been affirmed already at Pisa and Constance, concerning the superiority of Councils over Popes; declared of itself that, as a lawfully assembled Council, it could neither be dissolved, nor prorogued, nor



the place of its meeting changed, unless by its own consent ; and, having summoned Eugenius and his Cardinals to take their share in its labours, went forward in earnest with the work of reformation. Eugenius yielded for the time ; recalled the Bull which had hardly stopped short of anathematizing the Council ; and sent his legates to Basle. Before long, however, he and the Council were again at strife ; the Pope complaining, not without some reason, that in these reforms, in the abolition of First Fruits, of the payment to be made by Archbishops for their palls, with various others, one source after another of income was being dried up, while no other provision was made for the maintenance of the due dignity of the Papal Court, or even for the defraying of its necessary expenses. As the quarrel deepened the Pope removed the seat of the Council to Ferrara (Sept. 13, 1437), on the plea that negotiations with the envoys of the Greek Church would be more conveniently conducted in an Italian city ; and from thence to Florence (1439). The Council refused to stir, first suspending (Jan. 24, 1438), then deposing the Pope (July 7, 1439), and electing another, Felix V., in his stead ; this Felix being a retired Duke of Savoy, who for some time past had been playing the hermit in a villa on the shores of the lake of Geneva. The Council in this extreme step failed to carry public opinion with it. It was not merely that Eugenius denounced his competitor by all the worst names he could think of,—and the Papal Chancery had a wonderful, indeed an inexhaustible supply of these names of contempt and scorn and hate,—declared him a hypocrite, a wolf in sheep's clothing, a Moloch, a Cerberus, a Golden Calf, a second Mahomet, an antichrist ; but the Church in general shrank back in terror from the prospect of another Schism, to last, it might be, for well-nigh another half century. And

thus the Council lost ground daily ; its members fell away ; its confidence in itself departed ; and, though it took long in dying, it did in the end die a death of inanition (April 25, 1449). Again the Pope remained master of the situation, the last reforming Council,—for it was the last,—having failed in all which it undertook as completely and as ingloriously as had done the two which went before.

Shall we lament the defeat of so many well-intended efforts for the Church's good ? Have we reason to suppose that there was any real help for a Church, sick at heart, sick throughout all her members, any true healing for her hurts, in that which these Councils proposed to effect ; assuming they had been able to bring this about, instead of succumbing, they and their handiwork, before the superior craft and skill which were arrayed against them ? I cannot believe it. The Gersons, the Clemangises, the d'Aillys, with the other earnest *Doctrinaires* who headed this movement,—let them have the full meed of honour which is their due ; but with all their seeing they did not see what is now most plain to us ; they only most inadequately apprehended the sickness wherewith the Church was sick. For them the imperious necessity of the time was a canonically chosen Pope, and one who, if inclined to go wrong, might find the law of the Church too strong for him ; when indeed what the time needed was no Pope at all ; what it wanted was, that the profane usurpation by a man of the offices of Christ,—kingly, priestly, prophetic,—should cease altogether ; that the standing obstacle to the Church's unity,—a local centre for a divine Society whose proper centre, being the risen and ascended Lord, was everywhere,—should be removed. They would admit no errors of doctrine in the Church, but only abuses in practice ; wholly refused to

see that the abuses were rooted in the errors, drew all their poisonous life from them, and that blows stricken at the roots were the only blows which would profit. So far from admitting this, the most notable feat which in all their course they had accomplished was the digging up the bones of a dead man, and the burning of a living who had invited them to acknowledge their errors and to amend them.

And yet, failure upon failure as these Councils had proved, wholly as every gain which they seemed to have secured for the Church was again lost before many years had elapsed, total failures they were not. They played their part in preparing the Church for a truer deliverance than any which they themselves could have ever wrought. The Hildebrandine idea of the Church,—a Society, that is, in which only one person had any rights at all,—this idea, questioned, debated, denied, authoritatively condemned, could never dominate the Church and world, as for nearly three centuries it had done. The decrees of the Councils might be abrogated, and their whole legislation abolished; but it was not possible to abolish from men's minds and memories that such once had been. There needed many blows, and from many quarters, to overthrow so huge and strong-built a fabric as that of the medieval Papacy. By the Councils one of these blows was stricken.

A word or two more upon these Councils before we close. And first,—we are, I think, often surprised at the general helplessness which they displayed in their struggles with the Papacy. Taking account of all the forces which were ranged on their side, the secular Princes being nearly always with them, and so too the Universities and great Schools of civil law, not to speak of almost all the nobler single spirits of the age, it is difficult to under-

stand how they should have made so poor a fight, should have been worsted so soon and so completely. And yet one or two considerations may diminish this surprise. Thus it is easy to see at what immense disadvantage upon their side the battle was fought. In any case the interval between one Council and another must have been considerable—the occupant of the Papal Chair made these intervals much greater, and during them he could do very much as he pleased. Then, too, while the Councils had nothing to give away, the Pope had almost any amount of canonries, deaneries, bishoprics, cardinals' hats, and what not, in his gift; with these he could be, and was, a rich rewarder of those who diligently sought and served him; and had thus nearly all the venal talent of the age at his command. And there was more than this. The Pope and those whose fortunes were bound up with his, knew their own mind, and had but one mind and one policy; namely to concede nothing, or if under extreme pressure conceding aught, to resume this at the first opportunity. But those who would reform the Church had many minds and many remedies. Some saw in this and some in that the true medicine for the Church's hurts; the major part counting that a reform in discipline was all which was needed, while only a wiser few saw that the mischief lay deeper than that by such superficial treatment it could be reached.

Baffled and defeated as the Councils had been, they still left behind them questions for solution which caused not a little trouble and perplexity to the victors. Thus the question whether they should be recognized as lawful, and so authoritative, assemblies of the Church Catholic or not (*Concilia* or *Conciliabula*), was one of an immense embarrassment. This embarrassment was naturally felt the most strongly in the period immediately succeeding;

but is one which has more or less perplexed Roman Catholic legists to the present day. The dilemma was a very real one. If they were Councils indeed, and truly represented the Church, see what followed: Councils might meet without the authority of Popes, might set limits to their power, might depose one and elect another in his stead; all which being admitted, what became of the Papal Supremacy, of the Papal Infallibility? or who could gainsay the claim of the Councils to be the tribunal of highest instance, the ultimate seat of all authority in the Church? But if, in terror of consequences such as these, the name of Councils was denied to these assemblies, by what right did the Popes who owed their election to the Councils, and others in succession to them, who owed theirs to the votes of Cardinals by these same Popes appointed, sit in the Papal Chair? To question or deny the competency of those electing was to question or deny the foundations on which their own position rested. The solution which was found of this difficulty was ingenious in its simplicity. Whatever things were done in the Councils *conciliariter*, that is, as things ought to be done in Councils, were to stand; whatever otherwise, as null and void, must disappear; the Pope in each case being the judge of what was so done, and what was not. In this way the legitimacy of conciliar acts, so far as they affected the election of Popes, was saved. For the rest, it was left to the ever-watchful action of the Roman Curia to defeat any liberties which the Church had gained, and after a while to annul the whole legislation of the Councils, so far as the Papal autocracy was in any way restricted thereby. Æneas Sylvius, who had been a leader of the reforming party at Basle, displayed, as Pius II., the zeal of a renegade in the active undoing of all which he had helped to accomplish there. In an ominous year, in 1517, this was finally and completely effected.

## LECTURE XXI.

*WICLIF AND THE LOLLARDS.*

It is long since we have dwelt with any fulness on our English Church affairs. They demand our attention now. John Wiclif, born about the year 1324, at or near Old Richmond in Yorkshire, had already fulfilled a distinguished career at Oxford, and obtained such honourable recognition there as that famous University could give him, when it was his lot to exchange an academical for a national, and in the end for an European, reputation. A vigorous resistance upon his part to the encroachments of the Mendicant Friars, who were now swarming in England as everywhere, has been often adduced as the first notable achievement which marked out the future tenor of his life, and what this was likely to prove (1360). But there is much relating to the earlier half of Wiclif's career that passes for historic, while it rests in fact on very doubtful authority ; and it may very well be a question whether the whole story of his collision with the Begging Friars does not belong to quite another and later period of his life.

Be this as it may, he was first known to all England on occasion of the demand, made by Pope Urban V., that the tribute which King John had engaged to pay in acknowledgment of the Papal overlordship (1213), with the arrears now due of three and thirty years, should not be withholden any longer (1365). The amount, a thou-

sand marks a year, was small ; but the honour and independence of England, compromised by this payment, was much ; and Wiclif, who had a strong English heart, in whom the patriot and the theologian mutually sustained and strengthened one another, stood forth among the foremost and ablest of those who urged, and by argument justified, resistance to this demand. The place indeed which he took among these did not fail to draw upon him the deep and lasting resentment of the Roman Court, and of all whose interests and passions were bound up with Rome. Edward III., as is well known, referred the question of payment or non-payment to Parliament ; and, doubtless, was neither surprised nor displeased at the reply, namely that King John had no power to give away the independence of England, and that Parliament was ready to sustain the King in any resistance to this demand. The Pope, perceiving with what temper he had to deal, suffered the claim to drop, nor was it ever again revived.

The incident was a very significant one, and characteristic of a very memorable epoch,—for such the fourteenth century was,—in the constitutional history of England. As iron sharpens iron, so our wars with France were doing much for the making of both countries. The misfortunes of France were welding her provinces more strongly together ; while the triumphs of England, shortlived as they were destined to prove, and as they deserved to prove, raised the temper and courage of Englishmen, proud of themselves and of the Princes who had led them to victory. Growing more and more conscious of an independent national existence, there were humiliations which they would not accept from any Pope, least of all from one who dwelt under the ignoble shelter of a French King,—for this was the age of the Papal exile at Avignon—and spoke at this King's dictation.

Add to this that intolerable exactions and extortions, which had existed long, but were still waxing worse,—for wealthy England was regarded as the milch-cow of the Papacy, that might be drawn upon for ever, but could never be drawn dry,—had very nearly wearied out the patience of Englishmen, so that they were riper for resistance and revolt than ever before they had been.

And yet, with all this, a quarrel with Rome, possessing as she did a garrison in every land, leaning as she did upon grand traditions whose strength had not yet all gone out of them, was a formidable affair for a nation to undertake; and could only be brought to a successful end by the enlisting of all the patriotic spirit in the land. And thus it was felt to be no small matter that the most learned doctor at Oxford, the most accomplished Schoolman of his age, of a reputation in which the most keen-eyed foe could not detect a flaw, should be ranged on the side of the liberties of England. His good deserts in this struggle were not forgotten in the highest quarters; and when it was sought to bring him into trouble for some free utterances, not as yet on doctrinal, but on disciplinary matters, the influence of the Court, above all of John of Gaunt,—this exercised, it must be owned, in a very tumultuary fashion,—was sufficient to protect him against his ill-willers (1376). When too in the year following a still more serious attempt was made to silence him, the Pope himself interfering, and demanding that the offender should be surrendered to him, the same favour, reinforced as it now was by the active goodwill of the citizens of London, defeated this second attempt.

Presented by the Crown to the living of Lutterworth (1375), but still retaining his hold upon Oxford, neither the one sphere nor the other, nor yet both together, fully satisfied his longing to bring home to the great body of



the people the words of eternal life. Out of this desire his Poor Priests had then birth. These were itinerant evangelists who passed up and down through the land, preaching everywhere. The urgent spiritual necessities of the time, and the entire abdication by so many of the parochial Clergy of their duty as preachers of the Word, their inability indeed to fulfil this part of their work, even if they had tried, must be taken as his justification in the sending forth of these missionaries; which, as is plain, he could only do at some manifest cost to the Church's discipline and order.

Out of the same zeal sprang a still more important effort upon his part. Men may challenge and call in question portions of his work; but as many as believe that the Bible should be accessible to all, must acknowledge the obligations under which Christian England lies to him for his translation of this into the vulgar tongue. Under a sense of the vastness of this our religious debt, I dwell not upon another debt which yet no one with any true insight will regard as a small one; the debt I mean only a little lower which is owing to him by the whole English-speaking race for a work whose influence is felt to the present hour through every fibre of the English language. It would detract little from the glory of this Version, even if that which Sir Thomas More urged were true, namely that the Scriptures had been already rendered into English. This, however, was not the case. Portions indeed had been so rendered, mainly the Psalter, for the convenience of unlettered clerics. But as these translations in part had not been made for the lay-people, so neither had they reached them. Here first was a version of the whole of the Sacred Book, and framed with a design to be read of all. The New Testament was naturally the first attempted, and may very well have been

altogether from Wiclif's own hand. The whole Bible will have been finished in or very nearly about the year 1381.

There was a loud outcry of course. Translations from one language to another, it was urged, in the very necessity of things did but imperfectly represent their originals,—which is quite true, but not reason sufficient for excluding them; and, as was well retorted at the time, was not the Vulgate itself a translation? Pearls, it was said, were not to be cast before swine; the unlearned would wrest Scripture itself to their own harm; it was safest therefore to keep it out of their hands. But Wiclif held on his way, and made the perfecting of what he had begun a main business of what little now remained of his life. It was inevitable that a translation in which many had borne a part,—not all with the same notions of what the duties of a translator were, neither all endowed with the same mastery of tongues,—whatever its merits might be, should offer inconsistencies, inequalities, imperfections manifold. Here literal accuracy had been sacrificed to the attaining of greater clearness; there a too close adherence to the letter had caused the spirit to escape; while many passages through an over-literal rendering were unintelligible. No one can have been better aware than Wiclif himself of the shortcomings of his work. But other hands than his were to accomplish its revision, and mainly those of his faithful curate and underworker, John Purvey. This later or second recension of the Wiclifite Bible has cleared itself of many of the harshnesses, crudities, and other smaller defects which clung to the earlier. The two recensions, I may mention, stand side by side, in parallel columns, in the noble edition, published by the Clarendon Press at Oxford (1850), of this first English Bible—that on the left being the earlier,

and either Wiclif's own or made immediately under his eye; while on the right is the later revision, which was not published till several years after his death. I need hardly remind you that this work of Wiclif, with all its merits, is the translation of a translation; that its original is the Vulgate; the Hebrew Old Testament, and with rarest exceptions the Greek New, being alike sealed books even to the most accomplished scholars of that generation.

A few words on the latter years of Wiclif's life. Twice, as we have seen, he had been drawn into question; he was destined to be so once more. On the death of Gregory XI. (1378) followed the double election to the Papal throne, and on that double election the Great Schism of the West. This exercised a profound influence on Wiclif,—less upon his outer fortunes than his inward convictions; though it is quite possible that this Schism, occupying men's thoughts as it must, weakening too as it did the Church's central authority, may have prevented the searching out of heretics for due punishment with the same energy as before; and that thus a man, the object of so keen a hatred, should after all have been suffered to die in his bed.

But of the effects of the Schism on his inward convictions he has left no doubt. When he beheld two, who both called themselves by the holiest name on earth, hurling anathemas each at the other and at all the adherents of the other,—shrinking from the employment of no weapons by which they might harm one another,—equally hateful and equally contemptible,—he no longer beheld in them a true Pope and a false one between whom to choose; but rather two that were false alike, the two halves of Antichrist, making up the perfect Man of Sin between them. Henceforth the abuse of all abuses

for him was not this wrongful thing or that which the Papacy allowed or enjoined, but the Papacy itself. About this same time Wiclif came to another important conviction, namely that the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation was anti-scriptural; and with the straightforward boldness which marked all his career he announced this conviction in the pulpits of Oxford. Hereupon followed the latest organized attempt to suppress him (1382). This found him weaker in outward supports than when exposed to similar attacks at an earlier day. Many were terrified by the communistic outbreak known as Wat Tyler's insurrection, which occurred at the beginning of the preceding year; and, without directly accusing him, accused his teaching of having helped to foment it, just as at a later day the atrocities of the Peasants' War were laid to Luther's door. Nor indeed can the teaching of Wiclif be wholly acquitted of containing in it an element of disturbance which could hardly fail to make itself felt alike in Church and in State. Only those who were in the grace and favour of God were the righteous possessors of anything here—in one sense a very solemn truth, in another the justification of the wildest revolution, such as, if admitted, would go very far to the overthrowing of the whole order of the present world. Then too, in the new reign,—for we have reached the reign of Richard II.,—John of Gaunt was not that power in the State which once he had been; and now that the points in debate were not of discipline but of doctrine, wherein as a layman he may have felt but a feeble interest, even he counselled submission. Many others too, who had stood side by side with Wiclif when he assailed open and flagrant abuses, shrunk from making common part with him when he ventured to question the Church's faith in its holiest mystery of all.

And yet, though his adversaries were able to go far

in the condemnation of his teaching upon this point,—none of the other charges, I may observe, appear to have been seriously pressed,—in some strange way they were hindered from proceeding to the last extremities against his person. From Oxford, indeed, he found it prudent to withdraw ; but the two closing years of his life he spent unmolested at Lutterworth, in the discharge of those duties of a parish priest to which he attached so high an importance. I may add that some of his most vigorous and systematic onslaughts upon the abuses and errors of his time, his *Dialogus* for example, belong to this latest period of his life. Plainly therefore he did not retire to Lutterworth, as some have suggested, under a tacit understanding with his enemies, that they should leave him alone, and that he should hold his peace.

It would be pleasant to think that Chaucer had Wiclif in his eye, when he drew his exquisite portrait of ‘the poor Parson of the town ;’ but almost every line of that portrait belongs, as it seems to me, to an obscurer man, and not to one with whose good report or whose evil report all England was ringing from side to side. It is the portrait of one who, satisfied with reforming himself and feeding the flock specially committed to his charge, did not count it his mission to attempt to reform the whole Church, save in the way of setting a noble example of one who sought not his own things to all. Add to this that it is scarcely on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury that we should look for Wiclif. He was, as is well known, struck with palsy while celebrating mass in his church at Lutterworth on the day of the Holy Innocents (Dec. 28, 1384). His adversaries transferred the occurrence of the fatal stroke to the day following, being the day of St. Thomas, that so they might trace in that stroke the just vengeance of the saint and martyr upon

one who had dared to find fault with the honours so prodigally bestowed upon him and the riches heaped on his shrine.

What shall we say in parting from Wiclif and his work? And first, with all due thankfulness to Almighty God that He raised up this witness for so much of truth, we, members of the Anglican Church, may not the less be thankful that our Reformation was not in his time, nor of his doing. From a Church reformed under the auspices of one who was properly the spiritual ancestor of our Puritans, the Catholic element would in good part, perhaps altogether, have disappeared. Overthrowing much, he built up very little. In that knowledge of Holy Scripture which by his translation he diffused among the English people, there were good foundations laid; but in the main we must see in him rather a clearer of the ground than a builder thereupon. His axe was laid at the root of much, of pilgrimages, of Indulgences, of Crusades—which in his time had grown to be mischievous impostures—of Transubstantiation; though whether in this last matter he shunned danger on one side without falling into it on another it is not easy to determine.

Crude too and immature while some parts of his teaching were, other portions of it were manifestly erroneous; as for example his denial of the lawfulness of war, of the right of the State to inflict capital punishment on evil doers; his affirmation that it was every man's duty to refuse tithes to a priest who, according to his notion, did not discharge his duty, thus investing fallible and interested men with this judgment about their fellows. At the same time it is only fair to remember that some things are laid to his charge that he knew not. Thus there is one charge against him, it is as old as the Council of Constance, being afterwards taken up by the German

Reformers, and constantly repeated since; namely that he made the efficacy of the Sacraments and of other Church ministrations to depend on the holiness of the priest who ministered them. I need not remind you that if this were so the Church would be founded on the shifting sands of the goodness of man, instead of the eternal rock of the faithfulness of God. There is, however, no truth in the charge; but statements innumerable in his writings which do not merely imply, but directly assert the contrary. With the German Reformers for one reason or another Wiclif was never much of a favourite. *Der Spitzige* Luther calls him, while Melancthon dismisses him with the observation that he neither taught the doctrine of justification by faith nor understood it.

Wiclif's influence was not so merely personal that it should die with him. He left followers behind him eager to carry on his work. Lollards they were called before long—a name already loosely applied in the Low Countries and elsewhere to heretics of various descriptions; but which now, with the usual contempt for accuracy displayed in the giving of opprobrious nicknames, was fastened upon them. His Poor Priests survived him. Barefoot, and clad in long russet garments of coarsest material, they passed two and two through the land, denouncing everywhere the sins of all sorts and conditions of men, but with an especial emphasis the sins, the luxury, the sloth, the ignorance of the Clergy. As the Mendicant Friars had sought to take this weapon of popular preaching out of the hands of the Poor Men of Lyons, so these Poor Priests in turn sought to wrest the same out of theirs. And they found a ready hearing. Half of England, as a hostile witness not long after Wiclif's death laments, was infected with Lollardy. Nor was it

the lower classes alone of whom it had taken hold. Many temporal lords were at least its favourers and abettors. Armed knights and nobles would stand round the poor itinerant preacher, when any unfriendly interruption was apprehended. At Court the Queen Mother, and Anne of Bohemia, Queen Consort of Richard II., were well disposed. Oxford too remained Wiclifite for many years after Wiclif's death.

The year 1395 may be said to mark the highest point of influence and power which the Lollards in England ever attained. Up to that date they had been continually gaining ground. The Bishops, who would willingly have done more for their effectual suppression, had been embarrassed by the multitude, and the boldness, of the dissidents;—not to say that, in the desultory efforts in this direction which they did make, they invoked in vain the assistance of the secular arm. Richard and his advisers, without absolutely refusing to do anything, were evidently resolved to do as little as they could in the matter of persecution. But by the overthrow in Richard's person of one dynasty, and the coming up in Henry IV. of another, everything was changed (1399). To Thomas Arundel, who succeeded Courtenay as Archbishop of Canterbury, more than to any other, Henry owed the success of his daring usurpation; and Arundel, a bold and determined man, had made the putting down of the Lollards the task of his life. The Lancastrian Monarch, with his questionable title to the throne, had no choice but to make sure of the support of the hierarchy, which could only be purchased at one price. He was prepared, and his greater son was prepared after him, to pay that price. Laws of extreme severity against the Lollards were rapidly passed through Convocation and Parliament (1399–1400); and now, for the first time in England,



heresy was made punishable with death. Dean Hook indeed assures us that this position of hostility was far more a political act, prompted by the fears of Henry IV. and his lay supporters, than an ecclesiastical one; that from the beginning of the Wiclifite troubles the English Bishops were reluctant to persecute, and were only hounded on from without. One would be glad to think this true; but it is difficult to see on what authority he asserts it.

This much is certain, that the laws passed against heretics did not remain a dead letter. Of the preachers some recanted. It is a grief to find John Purvey among these, though there may be fairly a question whether he did not afterwards recant his recantation. Others, more stedfast than he, were silenced,—some by a lifelong imprisonment, some by the infliction upon them of those extreme penalties which now the law allowed. It is idle to say that persecution, if remorselessly employed and under circumstances fairly favourable, may not prove a very effectual means for repressing opinions. It has sometimes succeeded in extirpating them altogether. This which in the sixteenth century it effectually did in Spain and in Italy, it was unable to accomplish in England; but much in the way of repression it effected. Then too, the solemn condemnation at Constance of forty articles drawn, or affirmed to be drawn, from the writings of Wiclif, made a profound impression in England. Many had been laid hold of by the practical side of Wiclif's teaching, with little concern about the more purely theological; and had no intention of putting themselves, as they found that, adhering to him, they must now do, in opposition to the general voice of Christendom. Nor can we doubt that the ferocious wars, at once civil and religious, which desolated Bohemia and the regions of Germany bordering

upon it, were regarded by many as the legitimate outcome of the teaching of Hus, and thus at secondhand of Wiclif. Was England, men asked in alarm, to become a theatre of similar horrors?

In the year 1431 the persecution ceased, at least for a long time; why, it is not very easy to explain. Probably out of sheer weariness on the part of the persecutors, and despair of ever fully attaining their object; while yet the strength of Lollardy was so far broken as no longer to threaten the very existence of the dominant Church. Some speak as though, through the pitiless application of measures of repression, it had quite died out from the land, or only so obscurely existed that its traces could no longer be followed up. But this was very far from the case. Doubtless its aggressive force was spent. From being a power claiming recognition in Church and State, and in fact demanding that both should be fashioned and moulded according to its notions, it had been violently forced back into the position of a sect. With the loss of Oxford, which had now returned to its allegiance to Rome, the movement had lost its theological centre and stronghold. With the execution of Lord Cobham (1417)—‘the good Lord Cobham,’ as he was fondly called—its political significance had disappeared. Of the nobility and gentry who once favoured it some were dead; others had detached themselves from a body, to belong to which seemed to argue disaffection or worse. But of its continued existence, not seeking any more to transform England at once, but to reach its ends by slower means, by the winning of one convert after another, abundant evidence remains. Pecock in his *Repressor* speaks of having often conversed with the chiefs and leaders of the party. Nay, after an intermission of more than fifty years, in the first year of the Tudors, the burnings began again (1485). They were

going vigorously forward in 1511, in which year a correspondent of Erasmus informs him that wood had grown dearer in England, and no wonder, when the heretics afforded a daily holocaust; there never wanting new victims among these to take the room of such as were thus offered up;—Erasmus replying with a heartless jest that he could now less than ever forgive the heretics who, with winter at hand, were thus causing the price of fagots to rise.

It was probably the continued vitality and the renewed activity of the sect which again excited alarm. Large and open gatherings for the preaching of the Word were not indeed any more attempted. The itinerant preacher had given place to the itinerant reader, who was never more active than at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century. There were little assemblies or conventicles everywhere; and it might put to a wholesome shame our careless unthankful use of Holy Scripture, to read how precious the Word in those days was; how men came together by night, at peril of their lives, in lonely houses, in barns, in stables, to hear some tract which should expound that Word, as Wiclif's *Wicket* or his *Lantern of Light*; or, oftener still, to listen to Scripture itself,—a Gospel, or the Apocalypse, dear ever to those that suffer tribulation, or a Pauline Epistle, or, which noticeably enough was a still more favourite reading, the Epistle of St. James. And so the Lollards lived on: and when the Reformation came at last, these humble men did much, as we may well believe, to contribute to it that element of sincerity, truth, and uprightness, without which it could never have succeeded; while yet, as must be sorrowfully owned, this element was miserably lacking in many, who playing foremost parts in the carrying of a Reformation through, yet sought in it not the things of God but their own.


## LECTURE XXII.

*HUS AND BOHEMIA.*

THE Wiclifite movement at the outset, and for many years after its author's death, had been purely an English one. It was not always to remain such; but was destined to acquire an European significance. Some sparks of the fire which Wiclif had lighted, blown over half Europe, as far as remote Bohemia, quickened into stronger activity a flame which for long years burned and scorched and consumed, defying every effort to extinguish it. But for all this, it was not Wiclif who kindled the Bohemian fires. His writings did much to fan and feed them; while the assumed, and in part erroneously assumed, identity of his teaching with the subsequent teaching of Hus contributed not a little to shape the tragic issues of the Bohemian Reformer's life. But the Bohemian movement was an independent and eminently a national one. If we look for the proper forerunners of Hus, his true spiritual ancestors, we shall find them in his own land, in a succession of earnest and faithful preachers,—among these Miltitz (d. 1374) and Janow (d. 1394) stand out the most prominently; Neander devoting to the latter of these some eighty or ninety pages of his history,—who had sown seed which could hardly have failed to bear fruit sooner or later, though no line of Wiclif's writings had ever found its way to Bohemia. This land, not German, however it may have been early drawn into the circle of

German interests, with a population Slavonic in the main, had first received the faith, as it will be remembered, through the preaching of Greek monks. The Bohemian Church probably owed to this fact that, though incorporated from the first with the Churches of the West, uses and customs prevailed in it,—as that of a vernacular Liturgy, which it had wrested from Rome in the tenth century, the preaching in the mother tongue, the marriage of the Clergy, Communion in both kinds,—which it only slowly and unwillingly relinquished. It was not till the fourteenth century that its lines of discipline and worship were drawn throughout in exact conformity with those of Rome. All this deserves to be kept in mind; for it helps to account for the kindly reception which the seed sown by the later Bohemian Reformers found, falling as this did in a soil to which it was not altogether strange.

John Hus (b. 1369, d. 1415), the central figure of the Bohemian Reformation, took in the year 1394 his degree as Bachelor of Theology in that University of Prague, upon the fortunes of which he was destined to exercise so lasting an influence; and four years later, in 1398, he began to deliver lectures there. But he had early taken his degree in a school higher than any school of man's, in the school, that is, of Christ, and what he had learned there he could not keep to himself. Holding, in addition to his academical position, a lectureship founded by two pious laymen for the preaching of the word in the Bohemian tongue (1401), he soon signalized himself by his diligence in breaking the bread of life to hungering souls, and his boldness in rebuking vice in high places as in low. So long as he confined himself to reproving the sins of the laity, leaving those of the Clergy and monks unassailed, he found little opposition, nay, rather support



and applause from these. But when he brought them also within the circle of his condemnation, and began to upbraid them for their covetousness, their ambition, their luxury, their sloth, and for other vices, they turned angrily upon him, and sought to undermine his authority, everywhere spreading reports of the unsoundness of his teaching.

Let us see on what side he mainly exposed himself to a charge such as this. Many things had recently wrought together to bring into nearness countries geographically so remote from one another as Bohemia and England. Anne, wife of our second Richard, was a sister of Wenzel, King of Bohemia. The two flourishing Universities of Oxford and Prague were bound together by their common zeal for Realism. This may seem to us but a slight and fantastic bond; it was in those days a very strong one indeed. Young English scholars studied at Prague, young Bohemian scholars at Oxford. But, as has been already noted, Oxford long after Wiclif's death was full of interest for his doctrine; and among the many strangers sojourning there, it could hardly fail that some should imbibe the opinions, and bring back with them the books of one whom they had there learned to know and to honour. Thus Jerome, called of Prague, on his return from the English University, gave a new impulse to the study of Wiclif's writings, bringing back as he did several among these which had not hitherto travelled so far.

This man, whose fortunes were so tragically bound up with those of Hus, who should share with him in the same fiery doom, was his junior by several years; his superior in eloquence, in talents, in gifts,—for certainly Hus was not a theologian of the first order, speculative theologian he was not at all;—but notably his inferior in

moderation and practical good sense. Hus never shared in his friend's indiscriminate admiration of Wiclif. When in 1403 some forty-five theses, which either were, or professed to be, drawn from the writings of the English Reformer, were brought before the University that they might be condemned as heretical, Hus expressed himself in regard of these with extreme caution and reserve. Many among them, he affirmed, were true when a man took them aright; but he could not affirm this of all. Not first at the Council of Constance, but long before, he had refused to undertake the responsibility of Wiclif's teaching on the Holy Eucharist. But he did not conceal the largeness of the debt which to Wiclif's writings he owed. By these there had been opened to him a deeper glimpse into the corruptions of the Church, and its need of reformation in the head and in the members, than ever he had before obtained. His preaching, with the new accesses of insight which he thus obtained, more than ever exasperated his foes.

While matters were thus strained, there were other agitations at Prague which are too closely connected with the story that we are telling, wrought too powerfully for the bringing about the issues that lie before us, to allow us to pass them by, even though they may prove somewhat long to relate. The University of Prague, though recently established—it only dated back to the year 1348, but even so was the earliest which had been founded in a German land—was now, next after the Universities of Paris and Oxford, the most illustrious in Europe. Saying this I set it high indeed; for we must not measure the influence and authority of an University at that day by the influence and authority, great as these are, which it may now possess. This University, like that of Paris, on the pattern of which it had been modelled, was divided

into four 'nations'—four groups, that is, or families of scholars—each of these having in academical affairs a single collective vote. These nations were the Bavarian, the Saxon, the Polish, and the Bohemian. This does not appear at first an unfair division—two German and two Slavonic; but in the practical working the Polish was so largely recruited from Silesia and other German or half-German lands, that its vote was in fact German also. The Teutonic votes were thus as three to one, and the Bohemians in their own land and their own University on every important matter hopelessly outvoted. When, by aid of this preponderance, the University was made to condemn the teaching of Wiclif in those forty-five points, matters came to a crisis. Hus, as a stout patriot, and an earnest lover of the Bohemian language and literature, which indeed owe much to him, had more than a theological interest in the matter. Urged by him, by Jerome, by a large number of the Bohemian nobility, King Wenzel published an edict whereby the relations of natives and foreigners were completely reversed. There should be henceforth three votes for the Bohemian nation, and only one for the other three. To us, judging from a distance, such a shifting of the weights appears as a redressing of one inequality by the creation of another; but perhaps this was inevitable and an equal distribution would have simply brought matters to a dead lock. Anyhow the arrangement was so angrily resented by the Germans, by professors and students alike, that they quitted the University in a body, some say of five thousand, and some of thirty thousand or even more, and founded the rival University of Leipsic, leaving no more than two thousand students at Prague. Full of indignation against Hus, whom they regarded as the prime author of this which was injury and affront in one, they



spread throughout all Germany the most unfavourable reports of him and of the character of his teaching.

This exodus of the foreigners had left Hus, who was now Rector of the University, with a freer field than before. But affairs at Prague did not mend; they became more confused and threatening every day; and now that same shameful outrage against all Christian morality which a century later roused a still more effectual resistance, served to put Hus into open opposition to the corrupt hierarchy of his time. Pope John XXIII., having a quarrel with the King of Naples, proclaimed a Crusade against him, with that which had now become an invariable accompaniment of a Crusade,—Indulgences to match. But to denounce Indulgences, as Hus with fierce and fiery indignation denounced them now, or in any way to hinder their free course, was to wound Rome in her most sensitive part. He was excommunicated at once, and every place which should harbour him stricken with an Interdict. While matters were in this frame the Council of Constance was opened, which should appease all the troubles of Christendom, and correct whatever there was amiss. The Bohemian difficulty could not be overlooked, and Hus, who had retired from Prague into the country parts, there to wait till the violence of the tyranny had spent itself a little, was summoned to make answer at Constance for himself.

He had not been there four weeks when he was required to appear, not before the Council, but before the Pope and Cardinals (Nov. 18, 1414). After a brief informal hearing he was committed to harsh durance, from which he never issued as a free man again. Sigismund, the German King and Emperor Elect, who had furnished Hus with a safe-conduct which should protect him, 'going to the Council, tarrying at the Council, returning from

the Council,' was absent from Constance at the time, and heard with genuine displeasure how lightly regarded this promise and pledge of his had been. Some big words too he spoke, threatening to come himself and release the prisoner by force; but, being waited on by a deputation from the Council, who represented to him that he, as a layman, in giving such a safe-conduct had exceeded his powers, and intruded into a region which was not his, Sigismund was, or affected to be, convinced. Doubtless the temptations to be convinced were exceedingly strong. Had he insisted on the liberation of Hus, the danger was imminent that the Council, to bring which to pass he had laboured so earnestly, should be broken up on the plea that its rightful freedom of action was denied it. He did not choose to run this risk, preferring to leave an everlasting blot upon his name.

Some modern sophists assure us that this safe-conduct, or free-pass as they prefer to call it, engaged the Imperial word for Hus's safety in going to the Council, but for nothing more—a most perfidious document, if this is all which it undertook; for the words, addressed to all whom they might concern,—I quote the more important of them in the original Latin,—are as follows, *ut ei transire, stare, morari, redire permittatis*. But the treachery was not in the document; and nobody at the time attempted to find it there. If this document had not engaged the honour of the Emperor, what cause of complaint would he have had against the Cardinals as having entangled him in a breach of his word? what need of their solemn ambassage to him? Untrue also is the assertion that this safe-conduct was so little regarded by Hus himself as one covering the whole period during which he should be exposed, by appearing at the Council, to the malice of his enemies, that he never appealed to it, or claimed protection from it. He did

so appeal at his second formal hearing (June 7th), the first at which Sigismund was present. 'I am here,' he there said, 'under the King's promise that I should return to Bohemia in safety;' while at his last by a look and by a few like words he brought the royal word-breaker to a blush, evident to all present (July 6th).

But to return a little. More than seven months had elapsed before Hus could obtain a hearing before the Council. This was granted to him at last. Thrice heard (June 5, 7, 8, 1415),—if indeed such tumultuary sittings, where the man speaking for his life, and for much more than his life, was continually interrupted and overborne by hostile voices, by loud and angry cries of Recant, Recant, may be reckoned as hearings at all,—he bore himself, by the confession of all, with courage, meekness, and dignity. The charges brought against him were various; some so strange and far-fetched as that urged by a Nominalist from the University of Paris (for Paris was Nominalist now), namely, that as a Realist he *could not* be sound on the doctrine of the Eucharist. Others were vague enough, as that he had sown discord and division between the Church and the State. Nor were accusations wanting, which touched a really weak point in his teaching, namely the merely subjective aspect which undoubtedly some parts of it wore; as when he taught that not the baptized, but the predestinated to life, constituted the Church. Environed, beset as on every side he was, by the most accomplished theologians of the age, the best or the worst advantage was sure to be made of any vulnerable point which he exposed. But there were charges against him with more in them of danger than these. The matter which was really at issue between him and his adversaries concerned the relative authority of the Church and of Scripture. What they demanded

of him was a retraction of all the articles brought against him, with an unconditional submission to the Council. Some of these articles, he replied, charged him with teaching things which he had never taught, and he could not by this formal act of retraction admit that he had taught them. Let any statement of his be shown to be contrary to God's Word, and he would retract it; but such unconditional submission he could not yield.

His fate was now sealed—that is, unless he could be induced to recant; in which event, though he did not know it, his sentence would have been degradation from the priesthood and a lifelong imprisonment. Many efforts up to the last moment were made by friend and foe to persuade him to this, but in vain. And now once more (July 6) he is brought before the Council; but this time for sentence and for doom. The sentence passed, his passion, if we may venture to use the word, begins. The long list of his heresies, among which the Council is not ashamed to include many which he has distinctly repudiated, is read out in his hearing. He is clothed with priestly garments; but only that these, piece by piece, and each with an appropriate insult and malediction, may be stripped from him again. The sacred vessels are placed in his hands, that from him, ‘accursed Judas that he is,’ they may be taken again. There is some difficulty in erasing his tonsure; but this with a little violence and cruelty is overcome. A tall paper cap, painted over with flames and devils, and inscribed ‘Heresiarch,’ is placed upon his head. This done, and his soul having been duly delivered to Satan, his body is surrendered to the secular arm. One last touch is not wanting. As some bind him to the stake, attention is called to the fact that his face is turned to the East. This honour must not be his, upon whom no Sun of Righteousness shall ever rise. He is un-

fastened, and refastened anew. All is borne with perfect meekness, in the thought and in the strength of Him who had borne so much more for sinners, the Just for the unjust;—and thus, in his fire-chariot of a painful martyrdom, Hus passes from our sight.

Some may wonder that he, a Reformer, should have been so treated by a Council, itself also reforming, and with a man like Gerson (*Doctor Christianissimus* was the title that he bore), virtually at its head. But a little consideration will dispel this surprise, and lead us to the conclusion that a Council less strongly bent on reforms of its own would probably have dealt less hardly with him. His position and theirs, however we may ascribe alike to him and to them a desire to reform the Church, were fundamentally different. They, when they deposed a Pope, when they proclaimed the general superiority of Councils over Popes, had no intention of diminishing one jot the Church's authority in matters of faith, but only of changing the seat of that authority, substituting an ecclesiastical aristocracy for an ecclesiastical monarchy,—or despotism, as long since it had grown to be. And thus the more earnest the Council was to carry out a reformation in discipline, the more eager was it also to make evident to all the world that it did not intend to touch doctrine, but would uphold this even as it had received it. It is not then uncharitable to suspect that the leading men of the Council,—like those Reformers at Geneva who a century and a half later sent Servetus to the stake (1553),—were not sorry to be able to give so signal an evidence of their zeal for the maintenance of the faith once received, as thus, in the condemnation and execution of Hus, they had the opportunity of doing. Nor may we leave altogether out of account that the German element must of necessity have been strong in a

Council held on the shores of the Bodensee ; while in his vindication of Bohemian nationality, perhaps an excessive vindication, Hus, as we have seen, had offended and embittered the Germans to the uttermost.

If any flattered themselves that with his death the Reformation in Bohemia had also received its death-blow, they had not long to wait for a painful undeception. All words would fail to describe the tempest of passionate indignation with which the tidings of his execution, followed within the year by that of Jerome, were received there. Both were honoured as martyrs ; and already, in the fierce exasperation of men's spirits against the authors of their doom, there was a prophecy of the unutterable woes which were even at the door. Some watchword by which his followers could know and be known,—some rallying cry like that which Luther had found in the doctrine of Justification by faith—was still wanting. One however was soon found ; not such a spell of power as Luther's had been, and having this serious drawback, namely that it touched a matter disciplinary rather than doctrinal, yet possessing a real value of its own, as a visible witness for the rights of the laity in the Church of Christ. So far as we know, Hus had not himself laid any special stress on Communion under both kinds : but in 1414—he was then already at Constance,—the subject had come to the forefront at Prague ; and, being consulted, Hus had entirely approved of such Communion, as most conformable to the original Institution and to the practice of the Primitive Church. On the other hand the Council, learning the agitation of men's spirits in this direction, fell back on that which in the technical language of theology is known as the concomitance—it was Aquinas who first used the word.—expressing as this did the

Church's teaching that wherever one kind was present, it was virtually *accompanied* by the other, so that under either kind the whole Christ was received ; which being so, nothing was indeed lost to the communicant through the withholding of the Cup from him. At the same time the Council solemnly condemned as a heretic every one who refused to submit himself to the decision of the Church in this matter (June 15, 1415).

But there was no temper of submission in Bohemia,—least of all when the University of Prague gave its voice in favour of this demand. Wenzel, the well-intentioned but poor-spirited King, was quite unable to keep peace between the rival factions, and could only slip out of his difficulties by dying (Aug. 16, 1419). Sigismund, his brother, was also in the regular order of things his successor ; but on one thing the Bohemians were at this time resolved, namely that the royal word-breaker should not reign over them. A period of miserable anarchy followed, and in the end, of open war ; such as, lasting for eleven years, could be matched by few in the cruelties and atrocities whereby on both sides it was disgraced. In Ziska, their blind chief (d. 1424), the Hussites possessed a leader with a born genius for war. The movable waggon-fortress whereof we hear so much,—against which the onsets of the German chivalry broke as idly as waves upon a rock,—was of his invention. Three times crusading armies—for they did not scruple to usurp this name,—thinking with no serious opposition to enforce the decrees of the Council, invaded Bohemia ; to be thrice beaten back with utter defeat, and shame and loss ; the Hussites, who at first were content with merely repelling the invaders, after a while, and as the only way of conquering a peace, turning the tables, and wasting with fire and sword all neighbouring German lands.

A conflict so hideous could not long be waged without a rapid deterioration of all who were engaged in it. The spirit of Hus more and more departed from those who called themselves by his name. Intestine strifes and divisions devoured their strength. The Moderates—those of Prague, Calixtines, Utraquists, for by all these names they were called,—weary of the long unhappy struggle, were willing to return to the bosom of the Church if only the Cup (*calix*), and thus Communion under both kinds (*sub utrâque*), were guaranteed to them, and two or three secondary concessions made. Not so the Taborites, who drew their name from a mountain fastness which they had fortified and called Mount Tabor. These, the Ultras, the democratic radical party, separating themselves off as early as 1419, had left Hus and his teaching very far behind. Ignoring the whole historic development of Christianity, they demanded that a clean sweep should be made of everything in the Church's practice for which an express and literal warrant in Scripture could not be adduced. When at the Council of Basle an agreement was patched up with the Calixtines on the footing which I named but now (1433), a few further promises being thrown in, which might mean anything, and, as the issue proved, did mean nothing, the Taborites would not listen to the compromise. Again they appealed to arms : but now their old comrades and allies were ranged in arms against them ; and, defeated in battle (1434), their stronghold taken and destroyed (1453), their political power for ever broken, they too, as so many before and since, were doomed to learn that violence is weakness in disguise, and that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Whether the Church of Rome made the concessions to the Calixtines which she did, with the intention of re-



tracting them at the first favourable opportunity, it is impossible to say. This, however, is certain, that half a dozen years had scarcely elapsed before these concessions were brought into question and dispute; while, in less than thirty, Pope Pius II. formally withdrew altogether the Papal recognition of them (1463); though a struggle for their maintenance, not always unsuccessful, lasted on into the century ensuing.

It was in truth a melancholy close of a movement so hopefully begun. And yet not altogether the close; for indeed nothing in which any elements of true nobleness are mingled, so disappears as to leave no traces of itself behind. If it does no more, it serves to feed the high tradition of the world,—that most precious of all bequests to the present age from the ages which are behind it. But there was more here than this. If much was consumed, yet not all. Something, and that the best worth the saving, was saved from the fires, having first been purified in them. The stormy zealots, as many as had taken the sword, had well-nigh all of them perished by the sword. But there were some for whom a better future was in store than the sword could have ever fashioned. A feeble remnant, extricating themselves from the wreck and ruin of their party, and having been taught of God in his severest school, pious Calixtines too that were little content with the ‘*Compacts*’ of Basle, a few stray Waldensians mingling with them, all these, drawing together in an evil time, re-fashioned and reconstituted themselves in humblest guise; though not in guise so humble that they could escape the cruel attentions of Rome. Seeking to build on a true Scriptural foundation, with a scheme of doctrine, it may be, dogmatically incomplete,—even as that of Hus himself had been,—with their Episcopate irrecoverably lost,

the *Unitas Fratrum*, the Moravian Brethren, trampled and trodden down, but overcoming now, not by weapons of carnal warfare, but by the blood of the Cross, adorning the doctrine of Christ by holy living, by well-ordered subjection one to another, as few Christian communities have ever done, lived on to hail the breaking of a fairer dawn; and to be themselves greeted as witnesses for God, who in a dark and gloomy day, and having but a little strength, had kept his Word, and not denied his name

## LECTURE XXIII.

*OFFENCES.*

No student of Church history who has any real acquaintance with his subject, to whatever branch of the Church he may belong, at this present day will deny that grave abuses, to employ no stronger term, had found their haunt and home in the later medieval Church. In the obstinacy with which these abuses were defended by such as were most bound to make earnest war against them, these students may not find, and not all of them do find, a sufficient justification for that revolt against authority which we call the Reformation. Inadequately provoked some count this revolt to have been, and sinful to the extent of this inadequacy. But largely provoked all allow that it was; and not less that a share, larger or smaller, of the tremendous responsibilities of this mighty convulsion, for such it was destined to prove, rests with those who stood out so long against the application of effectual remedies for patent ills. Of some of these ills, of offences very grave indeed which the Church permitted, —alas! too often herself placed in the way of her children, —I have spoken already, but only in passing. I must now speak of them more in detail. It is an ungrateful theme. If only we keep in mind that it is the Church of Christ of which we are speaking, how can we escape a sense of deepest humiliation as we record the strange transformation which this had undergone, until its whole

organization seemed little better than a vast and elaborate machinery for the wringing, under every conceivable pretext, of the greatest possible amount of money from the faithful, and hardly seeming to exist for any other end? But ungrateful as the subject may be, it is one which we cannot put aside.

I touched in a former Lecture on the endeavour of Gregory VII. forcibly to withdraw from feudal lords and other lay patrons the opportunities for converting the Church's property into family heirlooms, or for making still more shameful traffic with holiest things; nor did I keep out of sight that there was much to justify such an effort on his part. As however in the centuries which follow we listen to indignant voices of remonstrance growing ever louder and angrier, it becomes evident that the great reforming Pontiff did not effect more than a shifting, and that for the worse, of the chief seat of these scandals. Instead of lay, they were now priestly hands,—and not seldom the hands which should have been kept cleanest of all,—that were defiled with bribes. The money-changers, violently driven from the outer court of the Temple, were not driven forth into the open day, but retreated inwardly, and set up their tables again in the Holy of Holies itself; so that the bitter epigram of our English Owen, to the effect that men might dispute whether Peter had been ever at Rome, but none could deny the presence of Simon there, was not bitterer than the truth would warrant. Conscious of the charge to which many of the Popes lay open, the later Canonists, with a prudent foresight, taught that what was simony in others was not simony in them, seeing that everything in the Church was theirs; so that it was not in the power of a Pope to commit this sin, any more than in the power of God to lie, or otherwise to deny Himself.

The depths of shame to which it was possible to descend in this quest of unhallowed gain had been only partially sounded in the times which preceded the Avignonese Popedom ; though indeed as early as the twelfth century John of Salisbury had told Pope Adrian IV. to his face that at Rome everything might be gotten with money, and nothing without it ; so he himself relates. ‘Our predecessors,’ exclaimed Clement VI. (1342–1352), himself one of the worst offenders in this line, ‘did not know how to play Pope.’ During the Great Schism, as may be supposed, things did not mend, nor yet in the times which intervened between this and the Reformation ; perhaps they grew even worse, as is the nature of things evil to do, not to say that there were many obvious reasons why such should at that time have been the course which they travelled. You heard just now of the impeccability with which in this particular matter the Pope was clothed. Hear very briefly how far this impossibility of sinning was pushed.

‘Provisions’ or ‘Expectancies’ were pre-occupations on his part of ecclesiastical benefices which were not yet vacant ; and which, if vacant, would not be in his gift. Looking forward to a vacancy, the Pope would address to the patron Letters Commendatory (*preces*), which before long were exchanged for Letters Mandatory (*mandata*), at first requesting, but after a while commanding, that whenever such vacancy occurred, this or that person might be appointed to fill it ; or, in more general terms, that it might be kept open until his pleasure in the matter was known. In this way he obtained possession for nominees of his own of the choicest preferments throughout all Western Christendom. We need not suppose that it was at the outset a mere unmitigated spirit of greed, seeking to draw all to itself, which was here at

work. How many injustices of fortune there were in the Church to redress, how many faithful toilers going unrewarded, how many capable of excellent work if opportunity offered, left in the background ; and who so fit to redress all these injustices as he who from his commanding watch tower had the supreme oversight of all ? So long as he showed that he had these objects at heart, men did not grudge him the means to fulfil them, nor did they too curiously ask how these means were obtained. Little by little, however, as things went worse in the Church, all which excused or palliated this encroachment of the Pope on the rights of other patrons vanished away, and nothing but the naked wrong remained. Some of the preferments in this way acquired he might still bestow on his favourites, unworthy favourites too often, but more were sold, the merchandise of them after a while being carried on in the open day, without cloke or concealment ; and with incidents which made this ugly traffic more ugly still. Thus it would often happen that a multitude of expectants had paid down the price for one and the same piece of preferment—this, which could only be held by one, having been sold by anticipation to many. Cardinal d'Ailly expresses his confidence that if a hundred applied, they would all receive the promise, all would be invited to pay down whatever the appointed tarif might be. Hereupon it would follow that one or another, suspecting or knowing how matters stood, would pay a second price, and so procure a second Mandate from the Pope, annulling all his own recommendations save only this last ;—perhaps, indeed, not the last, but to be itself overlapped and superseded by a later still, which, with the significant *Anteferri* endorsed upon it, should evacuate in its own favour all that had preceded it. It is stated in one remonstrant memorial that the lives of actual incumbents,

whose benefices in their lifetime had been thus sold and, it may be, resold many times over their heads, were not always safe from the holders of such expectative graces. It gives us an instructive glimpse of what manner of men sought and obtained these, that this could be so much as imagined.

But what made the matter worse was this, namely that the Papacy, existing, as it was tacitly recognized that it did, mainly for the benefit of Italians, and such graces, in far the larger number of cases, being bestowed upon these or purchased by them, the most important benefices throughout all Europe came to be filled by persons totally ignorant of the language of those to whom they should minister. Not indeed that they often did so much as affect to minister, for they very rarely crossed the Alps into the barbarous world beyond; but, remaining at home, drew the revenue of their foreign deaneries, abbeys, or what else it might be, by means of those Italian factors who swarmed in every land. Perhaps, taking all things into account, and above all that many thus appointed were 'persons detestable in life and morals' (so one writing in 1311 assures us), this was in most instances the least harmful course which they could pursue, and their absence the greatest favour which they could confer.

It is here only just to mention that, even in the worst times of the Avignonese degradation, there were Popes, as a Benedict XII., an Urban V., to whose hands these blots did not cleave, and who would fain have cleansed, if they might, the hands of others as well as their own. It may be worth while also to hear how all this, if not defended, was palliated and the worst guilt of it shifted off upon other shoulders, by one of the cleverest, but one also of the most worldly-minded among the Popes.

To some Germans who complained that all things were venal at Rome, Pius II., defending as Pope all which as *Æneas Sylvius* he had been the foremost to denounce at Basle, makes this reply, so thoroughly characteristic of the man :—‘Complain not of the Holy See; complain rather of the ambition and greed of your own countrymen; who, running to Rome in quest of bishoprics or other preferments, and finding that they are not alone in this quest, emulously strive to outdo their competitors in the offering of gifts to such as are supposed to have access to us. Those who have the pontifical ear are not angels, but men; and men very much as you find men in other countries, in France and in Germany. They do not extort—they accept what is pressed upon them.’

These ‘Provisions,’ resented everywhere, were nowhere more indignantly resented than in England; and no wonder. The scale on which foreign ecclesiastics were quartered on the land, the extent to which the patience of Englishmen was tried, may be estimated by the fact that in the year 1240 Pope Gregory IX. sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury, requiring them to provide for three hundred Romans in the earliest vacant benefices which they had at their disposal, and restraining them from presenting any others until these his nominees had first been provided for. To nearly the same time belongs the firm but respectful refusal of Grostête, Bishop of Lincoln (b. 1175, d. 1253), to admit as a prebendary of his cathedral an Italian youth, nephew of Pope Innocent IV., a refusal which made so deep an impression on the popular mind of England; and which must have gone far to account for the fact that more than half a century after his death, the question of obtaining his canonisation was earnestly agitated here. The fact that Grostête was in the main a strong Ultra-



montane should enhance, not diminish, our admiration of the firmness which in this matter he displayed ; while at the same time it may suggest that from this resistance upon his part conclusions have in later times been drawn, in regard of his general attitude toward the Papacy, which the actual facts do not warrant.

In the necessity of things the appointments thus made, lawless usurpations as they were, could not all be bad. Sometimes, as I have already explained to you, there was a deliberate intention of making a good one ; sometimes one proved good, where there had been no such intention. Thus there can be no doubt that the thrusting of Cardinal Stephen Langton into the see of Canterbury by Innocent III. (1207) was a violent intrusion on the rights of the English Church and Crown ; but the appointment of a man, so true a lover of all which was best and freest in English life, was one for which every Englishman to this day may be thankful—if not to the Pope who made the appointment, only partially knowing his man, yet to Him who overruled this choice to so signal a gain for the English Church and people.

Time would fail me were I to enumerate all, or nearly all, the devices by which it was sought to fill full the Papal exchequer. Marvellous indeed was the ingenuity which some of these displayed. For example, it was claimed—Clement IV. being the first who advanced this claim—that all dignities, benefices and the like, which became vacant through the death of the beneficiary while at Rome, should for the next turn be in the Pope's gift. But the matter did not rest here. Again and again the net was stretched wider, and at the same time its meshes woven closer, that it might embrace more and more within its folds. Thus Boniface VIII. extended the claim, so as to include every ecclesiastical office held by

persons dying within two days' journey of the spot where at the time of death the Curia might be. It was a fruitful source of revenue. In the necessity of things there was a constant influx of the higher ecclesiastics to Rome; and these, detained there by interminable suits or by other causes, were exposed, not to speak of the ordinary chances of mortality, to the deadly Roman fevers, which then as now were ever watching for their prey.

These abuses, and I have dwelt but on a very few of them, were bad enough; for, though they affected the Clergy first, yet not the Clergy only. They must have told most disastrously on the spiritual interests of the laity as well, whose pastors could not fail to be morally injured by the consciousness of unworthy methods whereby they had obtained their right to minister in holy things. There were other abuses behind, which not indirectly but directly affected for their harm, not the priesthood only, but the whole body of the faithful; and of some of these I have now to speak. And first of Indulgences.

This huge abuse, as often fares with the hugest, was only of gradual growth, and sprang up almost unperceived, by such steps as I shall now describe. In an age in which Church censures were taken much more to heart than they are in ours, it lay very near that such as had come under these should be permitted, even invited, to substitute for penances thus imposed upon them some other which promised to set forward in one way or another the general interests of the Church. It is plain, however, that in any such commutation that which was substituted must not be severer than that in whose place it came; indeed, not *so* severe; for else there would be no sufficient inducement to make the exchange. It must be exactly what its name imports—an Indulgence—some-

thing easier, and virtually remitting a part of the penalty incurred. So soon, however, as it was discovered that these commuted penalties might be turned to some advantage in the way of setting forward objects which the Church had at heart,—a new Crusade, for example, or the building of some magnificent cathedral,—the temptation was strong to make them *much* easier, and so to bring as many as possible to the pardon-mart which thus almost unawares had been opened. It was, of course, always affirmed or implied that such Indulgences would only profit those who brought with them a right disposition of heart and mind, who brought, that is, faith and repentance. And it was taught, at least in the beginning, that they would avail only for the remission of ecclesiastical penalties, that they did not reach farther than this; it being only after a while that their efficacy was extended to Purgatory. But while precautionary statements of this character could, no doubt, be found in the writings of theologians, the pardoners,—those, that is, who had purchased the exclusive right to vend these spiritual wares within a certain district, and who naturally desired to make their wares as attractive as possible,—did not, we may be quite sure, seriously burden them with any conditions or limitations of the kind; the purchase of the Indulgence being itself accepted as the evidence of a contrite spirit, and men too often suffered to believe that there was no world for which these pardons were not good. It is easy to understand the extent to which all zealous repentance for sins past, all watchfulness against sins to come, were relaxed by the ease with which Indulgences were obtained and by the privileges attached to them. There were many Tetzels, as we cannot doubt, before the last, and some quite as shameless as he; what was bad enough in itself becoming much worse in the hands through which it

passed ; as certainly bettered it was not in the hands of the Pardoner, with his lap ‘ Bretful of pardons come from Rome all hot,’ who finds his place in Chaucer’s marvellous gallery of English life-portraits. It is not wonderful that earnest preachers of repentance long before Luther should have been filled with the deepest indignation at this murder of souls,—for so they were wont to call it,—should have declared, as one did in memorable words, that Christ is the only Indulgence, and in plainest words have warned the poor deceived people that trusting in those bought with money they were trusting in a lie.

There was, indeed, an evident misgiving for a while about declaring that to the Church had been committed the keys of that Middle World which is neither heaven nor hell ; that the Church could thus remit the pains, not by herself imposed, of Purgatory ; and the total and admitted silence of Scripture and of the early Fathers on the subject must have done much to augment the embarrassment. After a while, however, all scruples on this head were set aside—the domain in which Indulgences availed being thus immensely enlarged. Nor did matters stop here. In 1477 Sixtus IV. declared that Indulgences had a retroactive value, might be obtained by the faithful not for themselves only, but for the relief of such as had already departed and were now passing through, but had not finished yet, the discipline of those cleansing fires. It is easy to understand what an appeal there was here to some of the best and strongest affections of the human heart. Who could endure selfishly to withhold for some private gratification that which, laid out in another way, might mitigate or abridge the anguish of a parent, a child, a wife, a husband, and deliver from pains which, as they were popularly now described, differed little, save only in their temporary character, from the sufferings of the lost ?

But, as was inevitable, it would be sometimes anxiously asked, was it certain that there was any bank on which the Pope could thus draw without fear that his drafts might be dishonoured? Yes, it was answered, there was a treasure which was inexhaustible. Alexander Hales, an eminent Schoolman and a countryman of our own, was the first to discover this treasure hid in the field of the Church ;—*thesaurus meritorum* it was called. But what he set forth as a pious opinion, Clement VI. elevated into a dogma (1343), and one capable of being turned to very excellent account ; for, indeed, the convenience was manifest and immense of drawing bills upon the next world, and having them honoured in this. The fact of the existence of such a treasure, and of the Church's right to dispense it as she thought best, was arrived at by the following steps. None would be so impious as to deny that one drop of his blood who was Himself God would have sufficed to redeem the world ; which being so, it was plain that He who shed not one drop only, but poured out all, actually did and suffered infinitely more than in strict justice was necessary for man's redemption. There was a treasure of Christ's merits which in that redemptive act had by no means been all expended. Then to the merits of Christ, in themselves inexhaustible, must be added those of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of as many saints and servants of God as had kept not merely the commandments, but also the ' counsels of perfection,' and had thus wrought more of good than their own salvation required. All this overplus of merits, all these works of supererogation, as in language suggested by the parable of the Good Samaritan (*quodcunque supererogaveris*, Luke x. 35) they were called, went into the same common stock, for the Church was one ; they were all at the Church's disposal,

in other words at the Pope's, who alone had the key of this treasure; for him to make them over to whom he would, supplying the deficient merits of one by the superabundant merits of another, that so nothing might be lost. We have oftentimes in Roman errors the blurred reflexion of Christian truths, and nowhere more noticeably than here: for what is this but a broken and distorted reflexion of a very glorious truth,—of this namely, that in Christ there are treasures of grace unexhausted and inexhaustible, that the Church of which He is the Head is truly and not in name only one body, a communion of saints, so that no member of it lives and labours for himself alone, but the good of one becomes in a most real though mysterious way the common good and property of all?

The Fathers of the Council of Trent expressed no real repentance for the Church's sin in the matter of Indulgences, as indeed for an Infallible Church there is no room for such repentance; but only repeated a caution which had often, but with little fruit, been uttered before, namely, that they should not henceforth be bestowed with so lavish a hand and on such easy conditions as in times past. They had indeed been scattered with so careless a prodigality and made so cheap, that it was at last almost impossible to perform any act of devotion without acquiring some of these, whether one were seeking them or not.

A few words on the year of Jubilee, and then, little as we shall have exhausted, we may bring an unwelcome theme to the end. The institution of a Jubilee year belonged, as did the full development of the doctrine of Indulgences out of which it grew, to a period when the Middle Ages were already in their decline, and the institutions which had been their truest birth were verging to

their fall. The immense success which attended this new appeal to the devotion of the faithful, the response which it found, may have gone far to conceal this fact from the eyes of men. It was plain that the Roman Church, and Rome, the city of her solemnities, could yet awaken a religious enthusiasm ; that it was still a magnet mighty to draw hearts to itself. The year 1300, and the Pontificate of Boniface VIII., destined to prove in its close so disastrous, saw the first Jubilee. As that secular year drew nigh, it was declared that as many as, being in the proper disposition of mind, visited the shrines of the Apostles, the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul,—for fifteen days, being strangers ; for thirty days, being Romans,—might obtain thereby a plenary Indulgence, the remission, that is, of all ecclesiastical censures, and of all pains and penalties which these censures involved, whether in this world or in the world to come.

It was originally intended as a solitary opportunity, or one at any rate which at the soonest should not recur till after the lapse of a century. But the success which attended it was so marvellous, multitudes so great were attracted by it, the sums in one way or another drawn into the Papal treasury or otherwise spent at Rome were so vast, that the temptation to repeat the experiment at an earlier date was irresistible. And thus Clement VI., taking into account that for so many of the faithful it must be hopeless to expect in their lifetime the occurrence of this secular day of grace, and willing to bring its benefits within the reach of more, did in 1343 pronounce that the Jubilee should be celebrated every fiftieth year ; justifying this by an appeal to the fact that the days of Pentecost were exactly so many. Urban VI. in 1389 further limited the intervening time to thirty-three years, being the number of Christ's years upon earth ; and Paul

II. in 1470 restricted them to twenty-five; and at this it has since remained. Vast as were the multitudes who made the journey to Rome, you must not suppose that an actual pilgrimage thither was a necessary condition for the securing of the spiritual benefits of the Jubilee. Whatever these might be, they were equally obtainable by paying to a Papal factor, such as might everywhere be found, something about the sum which a pilgrimage to the sacred places would have cost. Numbers went; but numbers also were satisfied with this vicarious going.

A very significant commentary on these schemes of pardon,—stopping so very short of the Cross of Christ, and, instead of leading up to that Cross, very often leading away from it,—was the appearance about the time of the Black Death (1349), first in Italy and then in Germany, of the Flagellants. These, who generally made their appearance when some huge public calamity, such as that just named, stirred deeply the hearts and consciences of men, were companies, sometimes of men, sometimes of women, who, stript to the waist, wandered in long procession from city to city, chaunting hymns and litanies, and inflicting on themselves the severest discipline of the scourge, having from this the name of Flagellants, which they bore. Wofully astray they may have been, and were. The blood without which is no remission was not their own, but Another's; the stripes wherewith they should be healed were Another's; while yet, amid all their confusions and contradictions, it was for that precious blood, for a fellowship with those stripes, with the sufferings of Christ, that they were blindly feeling. It is nothing wonderful that the dominant Church frowned on these demonstrations, did all in her power to repress them, here and there burnt a leader of them; casting such a slight as these did on the medicines for the soul's hurt which she had provided, on the



schemes of pardon in which she was inviting her children to trust.

Mischiefs and causes of offence of a different class are yet to speak of. I have spoken already of the claims which the Roman Bishops made to draw all greater or more difficult causes for the last decision to their courts. Being in their own sight what they were, they could scarcely have done less. But the liberty of appeal which was thus encouraged and invited threatened to subvert the whole discipline, and indeed well-nigh to dissolve the whole framework, of the Church. After a while it was not greater or more difficult causes only which were drawn to Rome ; but whosoever wished to elude or to defy the authority of his immediate superior, did, under one pretext or another, claim to bring his wrongs before the Sovereign Pontiff, the supreme Ruler of the Church. The monk appealed against his Abbot ; the presbyter against his Bishop ; the Bishop,—and no appeals were more welcome than these,—against his Archbishop or Metropolitan. Apart from the continual conflict in which Rome was thus engaged with temporal princes and potentates, who could ill brook this giving of the go-by to all national courts, civil and ecclesiastical, she could not shut her eyes to the other manifold mischiefs which attended the abusive exercise of this privilege of appeal. We may imagine, though feebly, what these mischiefs must have been, when we call to mind the slowness of communication in those ages, the long delays in courts already choked with business, the temptation to the underlings of the Curia to multiply delays so gainful to them, the spirit of resistance to legitimate authority which was everywhere encouraged. But how renounce, or even seriously abridge, a right which so flattered her pride ; which was such a living testimony

continually borne to her supremacy ; which through innumerable channels brought such wealth into her exchequer ; and which, it is only fair to add, did sometimes hinder or redress an injustice that would not else have been put right ? Various attempts to set some limits to the power of appeal, to place some obstacles in its way, profited but little. The one remedy was not tried,—namely to restore to the several national Churches and States those rights of self-government, of which she had robbed them in whole or in part ; but Rome, making this restoration, would have ceased to be Rome.

The same determination to draw all to the Roman centre showed itself in the multiplication of exemptions from every jurisdiction save that of the Pope himself. The first ambition of monastery or convent was to obtain exemption from the authority of the Bishop in whose diocese it stood, to hold directly from the Papal See. For this it was willing to pay, and did pay, a yearly tribute. The independence which other monastic Houses obtained one by one, and by special favour, was bestowed in mass on the two great Mendicant Orders,—being included in the *Mare Magnum* (for so it was called) of the privileges bestowed upon them. But to others also it was imparted with no niggard hands ; nor is it hard to imagine the extent to which all efforts of Bishops to exercise wholesome discipline in their dioceses were crippled or wholly defeated hereby.

With this glance at abuses which had been rife for centuries ; which, as years rolled on, did not decrease but rather grew in malignity ; which Councils could do nothing to abolish ; which, if healed at all, were healed so slightly that they presently broke out afresh, showing themselves more inveterate than ever ;—we have a claim to ask, when the right or the wrong of the Reformation which

came at last is discussed, Was there not a cause? Let the excesses of this revolution, this shaking of the earth and the heavens, have been what they may, the rent in the seamless robe of Christ which ensued ever so lamentable, was there not intolerable evil to be abated, and evil which was obstinately resolved that it would not abate itself? When I say 'would not abate itself,' do not conclude that there were not from time to time those in high places, some in the highest place of all, who would fain have healed the hurt of the daughter of their people; and who, if they did not see all,—for who could see this?—yet saw something of the frightful bottomless slough into which the Church had sunken, and would fain have lifted it out from this abyss. There were Popes who earnestly desired a reform, who honestly laboured for one. But the system had grown too strong for any single man, even though he should appear to have all power at his beck. There were too many to whom the evil thing, that which above everything else needed to be got rid of, was as the very breath of their life. In the time of Leo X. there might be counted some eight hundred officials in the Roman Chancery and Datary, not to speak of a multitude of other placemen, most of them having paid highly for their offices; a serried phalanx in actual possession, and prepared to offer opposition, covert it might be, but not the less determined, to any and every reform by which their gains would be diminished. With the best intentions, how helpless, in the face of the resistance passive or active of these, must a Pope have proved, generally an old man and with few years to live,—the average duration of a Pontificate from first to last having been less than seven years;—a stranger altogether, it might be, to the intricacies of ecclesiastical affairs, or to the procedure of ecclesiastical courts. Who can count

it strange that honest and sincere attempts at reform were continually defeated, or that, if a little seemed for a while to have been won, all before long slipped back into the old ruts again ; things ever travelling from bad to worse, until at length for a violent disease a remedy as violent arrived ? Or who can greatly marvel if this sad confession, ‘ A reformation is at once necessary and impossible,’ should have escaped the lips of one honourably named in the Church of the later Middle Ages, but who for the moment must have forgotten the words of the Church’s Lord, ‘ Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’

## LECTURE XXIV.

*THE GERMAN MYSTICS.*

THE German Mystics will claim our attention to-day. German I call them, so to mark the distinction between them and other Mystics, of whom something has been spoken already (p. 214). If those were mainly French and Italian, or, to use a term which would cover both, Romanic, these are German above all, and by their 'innigkeit'—I look in vain for a corresponding word in English—they declare as much; Cologne too and Strasburg are their chief centres, and after these, Basle and Constance, Nüremberg and Brussels. But the men whom we name by this name, not always employed as a title of honour, how shall we describe them? Let it be sufficient here to say, that the evidence of divine things which the Schoolman found in the consonance between faith and reason reasonably exercised, each sustaining and confirming the other, the Mystic sought and claimed to find in a more immediate fellowship and intercommunion with God, in an illumination from above which was light and warmth in one. 'Let Him kiss me with kisses of his mouth,'—this, with the Bride of the Canticles, he asked; and with nothing short of this would be content; claiming in his higher moments to lose himself in God and in the ocean of his being, as the drop of water loses itself in the sea. This last comparison, one of very frequent recurrence, gives us a hint of spiritual dangers which were before him,

and which he did not always escape ; and of these we shall have presently to speak. In much which he longed for the most, he did but reach out after that which all, in whom the divine hunger of the soul after God has been awakened, must desire, namely a direct experience of his grace and goodness, an actual seeing and tasting,—and these are immediate acts,—that He is gracious.

We have watched the Scholastic and Mystic Theology in fruitful union with one another, each in a manner regulating, and completing the other, in St. Anselm and in St. Bernard, in Hugh and in Richard of St. Victor. And yet at a very early date some of the most far-seeing of the Schoolmen had perceived the danger of a too exclusively scientific treatment of religion ; which yet they, starting from their starting point, could hardly, if at all, avoid. Thus Alexander Hales, knowing the power of names, had suggested, as we are told, that theology should be contemplated and treated not as a science (*scientia*) but as a wisdom (*sapientia*). The position of the Schoolmen, however, was fundamentally a scientific one, and they could not abandon this without abandoning all by which they justified their own existence. The danger apprehended did not fail in due time to arrive. The Scholastic Theology lost itself more and more in barren speculations and endless strifes of words. Meanwhile the Mystic, detaching itself, assumed an independent development of its own, and, without intending this, a position of antagonism to that which had been once its fellow-worker and ally. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which are those of a Scholasticism ever sinking lower, ever losing more and more its hold on the hearts and intellects of men, are the centuries in which the Mystic Theology is in its fairest bloom.

Never were the strong consolations which only a living

faith could yield more needed than in those times. They were times of great tribulation for Western Christendom, for Germany above all. The conflict between the Papacy and the Empire had revived again; and, though not the war of giants which it once had been, seemed as far from a settlement as ever. It had drawn after it what has been called the Long Interdict (in 1324 this began, it is difficult to say exactly when it ended); the suspension, that is, for long years of all means of grace which the Church could withhold;—means which most men still regarded as absolutely necessary to salvation. There was everywhere intestine war, city against city and kingdom against kingdom. There was a Church so corrupt that it seemed incapable of enduring either its ills or the remedies of those ills. And then upon all of this came the frightful Black Death (1347–1353), sweeping away in its course two-thirds of the population of Europe. God's judgments were in all the world, and many were made worse by them; for it is only elect souls which are purified and made white in these cleansing fires.

There was much in the mystical Theology, this religion of the inner man, adapted to the needs of such a time; much to quicken and deepen the spiritual life of souls. The Church might be full of scandals without; a mere mechanical devotion might for multitudes have taken the place of the worship of God in the spirit; but it was still possible for those so minded to retire into the sanctuary of their own hearts, and to find Him and to worship Him there. The Councils, toward which men were already looking, might or might not reform and renew the outward face of the Church; but the true Mystic would fain reform and renew what was more within his power, and what he felt more nearly to concern him, namely himself and his own heart. If every ex-

ternal basis and support for government and religion had given way, we have, they said, at least ourselves left us. Within the circle of our own thoughts we have enough to content us. There, if we seek it, we can find order and peace and holy quiet, and God the Author of these.

This, like all other genuine reforming movements of the centuries which preceded the Reformation, lost itself in it; but only lost itself by obtaining there the fulfilment of whatever of true and good it had, with the rejection of all that was otherwise. In this instance the disturbing elements were many; and we have no choice but to dwell on them a little, seeing that we meet them not in those who hung on the outer skirts of the movement; but more than in any other, in him who for genius and original power was its foremost figure; so that it only came to the fulness of its beneficent working when it had on many points released itself from him and from his influence.

Of Eckart's life we know very little; neither the time of his birth nor of his death. For a date, by aid of which securely to anchor him to his age, we must be content with noting that in 1304 he became Chief Provincial of the Order of St. Dominic in Saxony. Eckart has attracted no little attention in recent years, has been put forward as one of three, the leaders in pantheistic speculation of the modern world;—Erigena, who stands out in solitary greatness, a lonely beacon light on our Northern shores, from whom Eckart is divided by three hundred years, and Hegel, separated from him by a still longer interval, being the other two;—though one might rather have expected to find Spinoza completing the triad. This much, indeed, is certain, namely that he was, and was felt to be, quite the leading spirit among the speculative Mystics of



his own age. From his greater light the others borrowed their light ; and their lesser urns were filled from his.

Not unacquainted with Aristotle, but holding more closely to Plato or perhaps rather to the Neoplatonists, nourished by the mystical element so largely to be found in Augustine, but lacking Augustine's wholesome doctrine of sin and of the Fall, working up into his philosophy all which he could assimilate from Erigena and from the writings ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, but attaching himself still more closely to Amalrich of Bena, and cultivating relations full of danger with the Brethren of the Free Spirit,—Eckart is not for all this a mere eclectic, picking out portions from other men's schemes of philosophy, and piecing these ingeniously together. All of most characteristic which we find in the later Mystics, we find already in the bud, often in the full flower, in him. What has come down to us of his own writings is little ; while, little as it is, my own acquaintance is only with select portions of this : yet this acquaintance is sufficient to convince me that he cannot be acquitted of charges of pantheism so commonly brought against him. Already in his own time they were thus brought, he in his latter years being so seriously compromised with the Church, that, high Dominican as he was, the Inquisition hardly kept its hands off him ;—probably would not have done so much longer, if death had not closed all his accounts on earth. Much obscurity rests on this later period of his history. In a Bull, condemning much in his teaching, but not published till after his death (1329), he is declared to have retracted various errors laid to his charge—which may, however, mean no more than that he disclaimed the heretical interpretation given to his words. Certainly many of them needed explanation.

Where God dwells in a man—this is a statement of

his,—He so dwells in him that He keeps nothing back from him of life or being or godhead, but imparts to him all; the gift of Himself being absolute, complete, and without all reserve. We are here, as you will at once perceive, on the threshold of that deification of man, that breaking down of the everlasting distinction between the Son of God and the sons of God, which is the characteristic danger of this theology; and which, when the first high tides of ecstatic transport have ebbed away, will be found to have left no Saviour at all for any man, or, which amounts to the same thing, will have left every man his own Saviour.

But there is more than this. Eckart in another place says, ‘I will not thank God because He loves me; for He cannot leave off to love me; his own nature compels Him thereto. I will thank Him because He cannot leave off this goodness of his.’ Now in judging of such language as this it is only fair to take note that he who employed it was evidently well pleased to put things in a startling way; and that the paradox is often in the putting rather than in the thing itself. But yet all these statements, with other to the effect that God imparts Himself to the creature because He cannot help it, that the creature does not need the Creator more than the Creator needs the creature, must be owned to play dangerously near to the edge of the precipice. No doubt there is a divine necessity in God. He can do nothing which would put Him in contradiction with the moral perfections of his own nature; but it is another thing when it is sought to bring the outcomings of God toward the creature under the same conditions of necessity. Neither can it be pleaded that Eckart is only playing on the edge of an abyss when he utters such words as these: A truly divine man has been so made one with God, that hence-

forth he does not think of God, or look for God, outside of himself.

Eckart, one has said, was a man drunk with God. God for him is not the Supreme Being, but rather Being. All other Being is swallowed up in his. It needs but a very slight acquaintance with the history of past speculation to know how inevitably and how swiftly excesses like this avenge themselves; how soon extremes meet; and how near to 'All is God' lies another statement, 'All is Nothing,' being as the obverse of the same medal. Eckart did not arrive at this; but others did, of whom and of whose speculations when we read, we are compelled to own that modern Nihilism is a very old story indeed. It will be seen too from such sayings as these that the pantheistic speculation of the Middle Ages, as represented by Eckart, does not so much issue in the deification of Nature—for indeed those ages concerned themselves very little about nature—but that theirs was a pantheism far more perilous and portentous, a deification of man; and assuredly wilder and more swelling words of vanity were never uttered than were uttered then.

But to return. In the face of all which bears so dangerous an import, there are passages in Eckart's writings which assert with all clearness the distinction between God and the creature; which set forth the relation of man to God as a seeing God, not as a becoming God; and which vindicate a unique dignity for Christ, as Son of God in a sense quite different from that in which others are sons as well. These passages are not always reconcilable with other in his writings; but, being set beside those other, testify that there met in him all the tendencies, Scriptural and unscriptural, churchlike and unchurchlike, which were working in his time. And thus it came to pass that he shared the lot of more than one famous

teacher,—as, eminently, of Socrates in the old world, and of Hegel in the new ; who, without intending this, saw in their lifetime, or left behind them at their death, two or even more schools of followers, these separating off to the right and to the left, and severally claiming to be the authentic guardians of the master's teaching. So fared it with Eckart, whom churchmen and speculative pantheists alike claimed ; and in whom, no doubt, both could affirm with truth that they recognized much that was their own.

It will be seen from what has been said that Eckart's interests were speculative rather than practical ; philosophical rather than theological. It was not so with his most distinguished followers. The three most eminent names among these are Tauler ('the Illuminated Doctor,' as he was called, d. 1361) ; Ruysbroek ('the Ecstatic Doctor,' b. 1293, d. 1381), and Amandus Suso (b. 1300, d. 1365). Each of these has a character of his own ; Tauler is the more practical ; Ruysbroek the more contemplative ; Amandus Suso the more poetical. Of these the scholars, all alike are clear of the pantheistic antinomian errors, which,—so far as his teaching went,—the Master hardly escaped, even if he did escape ; they all indeed earnestly witness against those errors. But I have dwelt so long on the master-spirit as to forbid me to dwell, which I would willingly have done, on those who followed in his train.

In such time as remains I would rather consider in what relation to the Reformation of the sixteenth century the Mystics of the fourteenth stood. It is a question of much interest ; for as in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries all other tendencies were working together toward one great event, so doubtless was this which occupies us to-day. But it is a question which will be

best answered by a brief consideration of the position which the Mystics occupied in relation to the Church of their own time. They took then, we may first observe, no position of conscious opposition to the Church; while yet for all this they were very far from being what the Schoolmen, at least for a time, had been, a support to it and a strength; nay rather, without intending this, they did much to weaken its authority, and prepare the way for its fall. They did not seek to break down, nor even to set aside, that vast and elaborate machinery of external helps for the furthering of the spiritual life which little by little the Church had got together for its children. But it was plain, not so much from what they said and did, as from what they did not say and do, that they ascribed to this machinery comparatively little value,—their estrangement from it being the more significant that they seem themselves quite unconscious of any such estrangement existing. They do not resist, renounce, defy,—they simply pass by much which so many counted necessary for salvation. I have read that in all Thomas à Kempis' numerous writings there is but one reference to the Pope. Assuredly he would have been himself surprised if any had told him this.

The German Mystics in another way, and again without intending it, helped to prepare the way for others who should follow them. Of the rise of the modern languages of Europe into dignity and importance I have already spoken something; but what others had begun in the way of giving to these languages their place of rightful honour the Mystics carried further. The dominion of Latin as the sole language in which men could preach or pray, theologically think or debate, had its advantages so long as the modern languages of Europe were unformed barbarous dialects, without order or beauty, grace or

strength, painfully helpless for the expressing of ought beyond the commonest needs of every day life. But the right of one time may under altered circumstances become the wrong of another. It *had* become a wrong that men could not hear the great things of God in the tongues wherein they were born, now that in these tongues the glad tidings could be told so well. The famous preachers among the German Mystics did much to abate that wrong ; to throw down such barriers as still hindered a perfect recognition of this fact. Immense numbers of their sermons in the vulgar tongue, some published, far more unpublished, survive in the public libraries of Germany to this day.

And yet with all this admitted, and taking the Mystics at their best and not at their worst, judging of them and of their teaching by their most favourable representatives, it is sufficiently plain, for all history attests the fact, that there dwelt in them no power to heal the deeper hurts of the Church. When we liken them, as one is tempted to do, to some river which, with many turbid elements at its head-waters, does yet, as it runs, more and more clear itself from these, it is easy to imagine some asking in their hearts, How came it that more than two centuries were still to run before a Reformation, so grievously needed, arrived? What was wanting in these, that they brought nothing of the kind about? To this question we have no choice but to answer, Much every way. There was wanting in the first place a sufficiently deep apprehension of sin. Their apprehension of this—it is mainly, yet by no means exclusively, of Eckart that I speak—was rather metaphysical than ethical. It was a sense of need and defect as clinging to and inherent in all finite creaturely life,—this rather than the consciousness of the transgression by every man of a divine law ; which transgression

required to be made good, and could only be made good by such a work of sacrifice and propitiation as that by the Son of God accomplished once for all on his cross. For them this objective historic fact, while they did not at all deny its doctrinal significance, was very far from being that central point of their theology which it must be for any theology that shall permanently satisfy the deepest needs of men's hearts. Not Christ *for* us, not the historic Christ who having suffered once on earth now lives in heaven for evermore, but Christ *in* us, is for them the centre round which everything revolves. One might almost suppose from their teaching that the Lord of Glory lived and died and rose again to the end that He might be thus reproduced in those whom He had been pleased to call his brethren. A modern writer, whose observation I can recal, but whose name has escaped me, makes a somewhat disparaging remark about the sermons of Tauler, to the effect that when we have read one, we have read all. The charge is extravagantly unjust, but I can understand what he means. Christ *for* us is an inexhaustible argument; but Christ *in* us is one which has its limits, and to the end of which we may far more easily come.

Here again was a temptation to extenuate the sinfulness of sin, to diminish the significance and attenuate the consequences of the Fall; here an explanation of the Pelagian element from which the Mystical Theology cannot be adjudged to be free; for, seeing that this Christ in us, this 'new creature,' must be always an imperfect one, every motive was at work for the reducing to a minimum men's estimate of the malignity of sin,—for a regarding of it as not so sinful after all, as deficient good rather than efficient evil. There was wanting to the Mystics exactly that which was *not* wanting to the better among the Reformers. The glory of these last was the even

poise with which they gave their full rights at once to objective and subjective Christianity; to the religion of the written Word, of Creeds and Sacraments, on the one side, and at the same time upon the other to the religion of the inner life, of the affections, of the mystical union between the faithful and their Lord: not allowing either to wrong, or in any way to obscure or thrust into the background the other.

Luther was never slow to acknowledge what he owed to the Mystics, above all to Tauler, than whose theology he declares (1516) that 'he knew none healthier or more agreeable to the Gospel,' and to *The German Theology*,—a little volume which he rescued from obscurity, edited with a preface of his own a year before the Reformation; and which he rightly esteemed as one of the most precious bequests made by the later Middle Ages to aftertimes. But there was that in Luther that was not in them, while yet there is urgent need it should be in us all, namely the profound sense of guilt and condemnation, and then of a release from these; and of this release by an act not of our own, but of Another, to be made ours by means of our faith.

In drawing this subject to a close, I am unwilling to leave without honourable mention the Brethren of the Common Life; and Ruysbroek, who, despite of Gerson's attack upon him, had so large a share in clearing the mysticism of his time from the antinomian errors which were clinging to it, furnishes a point of historic contact between them and the Mystics properly so called. These Brethren, whose headquarters were Deventer in Holland, were honourably distinguished by the same freedom of spirit which characterized the Mystics more strictly so called; but they were more practical, and were wholly



exempt from the dangerous excesses into which so many of those other ran. The 'Common Life,' from whence they drew their name, had monastic features about it; but at the same time it was a manner of life freer than that of the established Orders, being one without vows. In many ways these Brethren did excellent service during the times of which we are treating, that is, the transition period between the later Middle Ages and the modern world; above all by the schools which they founded, and the education, at once scholarly and Christian, of the young which they freely and zealously imparted. Among them was trained the author of the book, which, after the Bible, we may be bold to say is dearer to more hearts than any other book in Christendom; which has been reprinted many thousands of times, and for the honour of whose authorship Orders and kingdoms have contended;—a book which, despite of all that is wanting to it, has not obtained a reputation greater than it deserves. I need hardly say that I refer to Thomas à Kempis (b. 1380, d. 1471), and to his work, *On the Imitation of Christ*;—for his work, and not that of any Gerson or Gersen, we may confidently affirm it to be. It was in a school of these Brethren that Erasmus obtained, at least in part, his early education, possibly from them his intelligent love for the great writers of the ancient classical world. Parallel to these associations of men were companies of pietist women, Beguines and others, who, in like manner retaining their freedom, and not coming under direct vows, lived in communities, and devoted themselves to works of mercy and grace. Many attempts were made by the established Orders to disquiet these, whom they could not pardon for living a religious life without belonging to a 'Religion' properly so called; while more than once a Pope, satisfied that they meant no mischief, without distinctly ap-

proving or sanctioning associations of the kind, discouraged and defeated attempts to bring them into trouble.

We have another token of a reaction against mechanical devotions and servile work-holiness in the spread at this time of some who called themselves the 'Friends of God.' The name, blessed to receive, seems somewhat presumptuous to take; but those who thus made it their own would no doubt have replied to such a charge, that they did receive it, and that from the lips of their Lord; for his own words at John xv. 15 declared as much. They would have further urged that the name expressed a fact,—namely, that the service rendered by Christ's true disciples is the free service of love, and that such a service was theirs. It is hard to define with accuracy the attitude of Rome toward these; whom she sometimes tolerated, against whom she sometimes waged a desultory war. They for their part had not so broken away from her as to organize themselves into independent and hostile communities, though it was not long before many whom the Church regarded as heretics—some justly and some unjustly—sought to shelter themselves under this name. Among these 'Friends of God' Nicolas called of Basle, of whom we would willingly know more, stands out the most prominent figure. Neander and Milman and not a few others have assumed as certain,—though, as has lately been shown, it is not at all so certain as they assume,—that he was the anonymous Layman from the Oberland who so mightily helped in bringing Tauler to a deeper self-knowledge:—the story, so profoundly instructive, is familiar to all who are interested in the spiritual development of one, the best known to the afterworld among the Mystics. This Nicolas, invisible Pope of an invisible Church, evermore hunted by the Inquisition, but

long escaping its snares, passed up and down through Western Christendom, everywhere ministering to a hidden people who owned his spiritual sway ; until at length his good fortune forsook him, and on a visit to France he fell into the hands of foes who had long watched for his life, and died the fiery death, not at Poitiers, as Milman has it, nor at Vienna, as the *Tablet*, but at Vienne on the Rhone (1393). Here we must for the present conclude.

## LECTURE XXV.

*LATIN AND GREEK.*

WHEN these Lectures have reached their close, and this close is now approaching, the Latin Church will be found, if I mistake not, to have occupied four-fifths at least of our time and attention. The proportion thus devoted to it may seem to some beyond the measure of its claims, predominating as these claims must by all be admitted to be. But it is not so, and for more reasons than one. In the first place we ourselves are children of the Western Church, which must therefore naturally interest and concern us the most. But this is not the whole explanation. There are other reasons as well. We sometimes speak of the 'thread' of a stream; meaning by this whatever in it has motion and onward progress, as distinguished from lagoons, back-eddies, and standing waters, where forward motion there is none. Church history has also its 'thread;' and, if this is to be followed, it must be followed in the West—at least during the period which in these Lectures we claim for our own. In the Latin Communion is movement; in the Greek comparative immobility. There the flexibility of youth or of manhood which is youthful still; here the stiffness and rigidity of age.

It is indeed easy to exaggerate, not a few have exaggerated, the decay and general feebleness of the Byzantine Empire in its later periods, to pourtray as senile decrepitude what was only natural decline, to take no

adequate account of the bursts of martial vigour which from time to time signalize that history, the warlike princes who not seldom occupied that throne, the lost provinces which were won back for a season, the formidable assaults of Saracen, Bulgarian and Russian, which were victoriously repelled. Finlay's *History of the Byzantine Empire* will supply a wholesome corrective to this error, inclining, as it must be owned it sometimes does, to the opposite excess.

And as in aspects political, so also in ecclesiastical and theological, we may press quite too far the impro-  
gressive character of the Greek Church,—the absence from it during the times which immediately concern us of any productive energy, of the power to adapt itself to new conditions and new needs, to move with a moving world, such as was never wanting to the Latin. And yet there is truth in the charge; this want of adaptation displaying itself in little as in great, in the immense prolixity of the Greek offices, in their innumerable repetitions; in what Dr. Neale has called 'the bombastic style of the hymns, the tragedy-like phrases of the prayers.' But it is only partial truth. Much which distinguishes the Latin Church the most has its analogies and correspondences, not seldom its anticipations, in the Greek. This too has its Mystics. That glorious Confessor, Maximus (b. 580, d. 662), would take rank with the foremost theologians of the West; a star of the first magnitude, in whatever quarter of the Church's firmament he might shine. It boasts also its Schoolmen, though they may not be called by this name. In the co-ordinating and combining into one consistent whole of all the theological materials which he had at command, and in the use which he made of the logical formulas of Aristotle for the better accomplishing of this, John of Damascus (d. after 754) laboured as pioneer; nor was it

till some centuries later that any organizing genius in the West followed in the path which he had marked out.

But it is points of difference rather than points of likeness between the two Communions, with the lamentable results to which those differences led, that will mainly occupy us to-day. In the crowning of Charles the Great as Emperor,—really of the West and of that alone, though no such limitation was intended by those who professed to give this crown, nor by him who received it,—the separation of Italy, Rome included, from the secular domination of the Eastern Emperor was involved, however some faint umbrages of allegiance, and in South Italy some fragments of empire, may have survived for a while. But the faithful of East and West still constituted one Church; and it took a longer time wholly to dissolve the bands which knit them together. Two centuries were needed of interminable wrangling, of quarrels which were made up only to break out anew, before that quarrel came which no reconciliation should follow.

And indeed when I speak of two centuries such is an entire understatement of the case. This enormous rent in the mystical body of Christ was a catastrophe of which the remoter causes reach very far back into the earliest periods of the Church's life. Herein it resembles very closely the separation between Judah and Israel—a separation which we sometimes regard as the result of the accidental clashing of one man's craft and ambition and the youthful insolence of another: while yet on closer scrutiny we may discover the seeds of the dissolution of the national unity to have been sown long before; and that falling away from one another of the northern and southern Tribes, which in the end actually arrived, to have been on the very point of arriving many times before. Still less can the Schism of which we are now speaking be affirmed to have come

by surprise, or to be traceable to causes unexpected and fortuitous. For each thoughtful student of Church history the surprise is rather that the fatal moment did not much sooner arrive,—that the external communion should have endured so long. For indeed it is hardly too much to say that this disruption lay involved in the distinct and diverging characteristics of the Greek and the Roman. So soon as ever the love of many had waxed cold, and that grace which alone knits men into one, and reconciles national distinctions and differences in a higher unity of the Spirit, had ceased effectually to work, it was almost inevitable that a breach—it might be a little sooner, or it might be a little later—should follow.

This divergence between the Greek and Latin mind had not failed to make itself felt even while East and West were still in unbroken communion. It had done so in manifold ways ; perhaps in none more strikingly than in the different character of the disputes which agitated the one branch of the Church and the other. In the East these disputes turned all upon questions of high speculative theology :—the relation of the Son to the Father ; whether there were in Christ two Persons, or only two Natures, a human and a divine ; how far and in what ways these Natures mutually acted upon and modified one another ; whether the recognition of them did not draw after it an obligation to recognize in Him two Wills, harmonious indeed, but still distinct ; with other questions moving in the region of transcendental theology. They were questions of profoundest importance, but some of them apparently, though not in reality, remote from our practical Christian life ; and nearly all of them pushed by Greek controversialists into needless subtleties and refinements. But while the Greek Church was the principal sphere of these discussions, often scarcely heard of beyond

it, or, if heard of, awaking no lively interest, and sometimes incapable of being so much as stated in the Latin language; the West also had questions of its own, which were eagerly debated by it, but from which the Greeks in their turn stood aloof, as not seriously affected by them. To the Greek had in the main belonged the Arian and Nestorian, altogether the Monophysite and Monothelite—all that had to do with God as He subsists in Himself, or in hypostatic union with man. But if, in Hooker's well-known words, 'those grand heretical impieties which most highly and immediately touched God and the glorious Trinity were all in a manner the monsters of the East,' the West had its monsters too. The Pelagian controversy, turning on the mighty antithesis between sin and grace, on the question how far man is fallen, and what helps he needs to set him upon his feet again, belonged exclusively to the West. In it too were brought to a definite determination practical questions of Church discipline and order, as for instance, the conditions under which the baptism of heretics should be allowed to stand good; how those who had fallen away in times of persecution, and afterwards had repented of their sin, should be treated; with other questions of a like kind. Keeping all this in view, it is both interesting and instructive to note the different blazon and boast of the one Communion and of the other; the Greek taking for its highest honour that it is the 'Holy *Orthodox* Church,' the Latin that it is the 'Holy *Catholic* Church;' in other words, the one that its speculation is right, the other that its dominion is universal. How much which from the first was nearest to the heart severally of Greek and Latin utters itself here. Nor indeed less significant is the fact that while the representative Church of the East, St. Sophia's at Constantinople I mean, is dedicated to Christ as the Eternal



Wisdom of God, the representative Church of the West is dedicated to St. Peter, as under Christ the prince and ruler of the nations. How much there is here to explain the two serious mistakes, of the East that the Christian religion is a philosophy, of the West that it is a law.

In enumerating the preparations for dissension, and in the end for division, we must not omit the distinction, always making itself felt, of language. When indeed Constantine transferred the seat of empire to the city which he called by his own name, the majesty of Rome demanded that the language which Romans spoke should still be retained as the language of the Court, of the legal tribunals, and of the public edicts, however Greek translations might sometimes be appended to these; and it was doubtless Constantine's intention and expectation that Latin should continue the spoken language of the New Rome which he had founded. But this could not be. The dialects of Spain and Gaul might give way before the Latin; but Greek, displacing other languages, is itself displaced by none. Constantinople before very long became a thoroughly Greek city,—the capital of a thoroughly Greek Empire,—with a Greek-speaking population, who indeed were willing to call themselves Romans and their language Romaic, but would make no further advances in this direction. The dream that New Rome might be the centre of the Latin no less than of the Greek world, after some faint approaches to fulfilment in the days of Justinian (527–565), with him for ever passed away.

It is not easy to overrate the extent to which this difference in language wrought in preparing the way for a disruption, or in making it permanent when once it had arrived. Nothing perhaps so knits men's hearts together as possessing common objects of affection and honour. But it thus came to pass that the illustrious fathers and

teachers of one half of the Church were almost or altogether strangers to men of the other. In a bitter writing of a Greek controversialist put forth just before the final breach, he complains that the famous Doctors of the East,—Athanasius and Basil and Chrysostom and the two Cappadocian Gregories,—so far from being esteemed saints, were held in no reputation or reverence at all by the Westerns. These, it is true, though this would hardly have mended matters, might have retorted with perfect truth that the standard-bearers of their faith,—a Cyprian, an Ambrose, a Jerome, an Augustine,—were as little honoured in the East, were as completely unknown even to their very names. And this was the fact, with only a partial exception in favour of Gregory the Great, whose work *On the Pastoral Care*, and his *Dialogues*, had been translated into Greek; his day also being held in honour in the East.

The Greek Church with its unbroken traditions; with the treasures of ancient learning which it held in its keeping; with a theological literature preceding by two centuries any that the Latin could boast; having determined in Councils where hardly a Latin Bishop was present all the great questions that had risen up, and embodied these determinations in a Creed to which no Latin had contributed a syllable;—this Greek Church, that *had done* so much, looked down on the Latin as on a Church of barbarians. But the Latin had what was far better for present service than all that dead material, than all that consciousness of having accomplished mighty things in times which were gone by. It had the stirrings of a new and vigorous life within it. The past might belong to others; the present and the future it felt to be its own. The very different results of the invasion by the Northern races, as this invasion affected severally the Greek and Latin Com-

munions, did much to shape the destinies of the one and of the other. That immense flood of the nations, which, wave after wave, overwhelmed the West, but overwhelmed it only as the Nile with its fertilizing waters overwhelms Egypt, brought the Greek Church also into imminent danger and distress; but did not swallow it up. The rejuvenescence which the West found the East had missed. Overliving the immediate peril, it travels on in the same tracks as before. There is for it no breach of continuity, no new beginning; only a prolongation of the old, as it leaves ever farther behind the days of youthful freshness and strength. Taking 'Middle Ages' not as a mere chronological term, but as marking off certain centuries with distinguishing features of their own,—for the Greek Church, as has been often said, there was no Middle Age; and when we are sometimes tempted to judge harshly of those Ages, to count them a mere interruption to progress, it may be well to ask ourselves whether we would willingly be as that Eastern Church is; whether modern Europe could advantageously have done without the boisterous training, the rough but bracing discipline to which in those Ages it was submitted.

I have traced some of the remoter, let me mention now some nearer and more patent causes for disunion. There were quarrels as to the limits of jurisdiction, but these I pass by. Touching more closely the hearts of men were certain divergences in doctrine and in practice which had either existed from the beginning, or grown up by degrees; and which served to draw more sharply still the line of unfriendly demarcation; some of these so slight and pitiful that, as solvents of the unity of great Christian communities, one is almost ashamed to name them; but of which a few require to be named. Thus the Greeks brought a long catalogue of charges against the

Latins, as that they fasted on Saturdays, that they made the sign of the Cross amiss, that their priests shaved the beard, that they practised baptism by affusion, that they did not permit presbyters to confirm, that they used unleavened bread in the Holy Eucharist, that they did not abstain from things strangled and from blood. The Latins had a whole list of petty countercharges against the Greeks; but I spare you the enumeration of these. Whether urged on one side or the other, one would willingly believe that, unless deeper grounds of estrangement had been behind, these would not have been pressed as they were, nor suffered to contribute to the breaking of the bonds of peace between followers of the same Lord, and members of the same household of faith.

Even that which showed, at first sight, as so immense a divergence between the doctrine of Latins and Greeks—I refer of course to the question of the Double Procession—was not, after due explanations made, a difference so touching the foundations of the faith as to require that those who were divided upon it should refuse to hold communion with one another. This much all ‘sons of peace’ acknowledge now; while not a few go much farther, and are sure that if only the contending parties would dispassionately consider each other’s mode of speech, they would find that *no* difference existed between them,—that, while using different language, they intended the same thing. That the Holy Ghost proceeds or issues from the Father *and the Son*, had been always the prevailing faith of the Western Church; even as it was the strongest conviction of all its profoundest theologians that any statement short of this, any which should leave the Son and the Spirit with no other relation to one another except that of their common relation to the Father, would imperil the entire doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which indeed only found its completion herein.

To have withheld this prerogative from the Son would have called in question his equal Deity; and the long struggle with the Arians had brought this home to the minds of men, above all in Spain, where that struggle had been the most terrible. It was there, at the Council of Toledo (589), that in the Creed of Chalcedon to the words 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, . . . who proceedeth from the Father,' the further words 'and from the Son,' were added, which gradually found their way into the Creed of the West. Many who embraced this truth with their whole hearts were yet offended at what was thus done, above all at the manner of its doing. Almost from the first there were serious misgivings, not as to the doctrine expressed by the *Filioque*, but in regard of the introduction into the Creed, by one branch of the Church only, and at a provincial Synod, of words so important, and the constituting of them thus an article of faith; nor did there want earnest deliberations whether they should not be withdrawn. It was felt, however, by many that it would be one thing never to have introduced the words; but quite another, after they had been introduced, to withdraw them; while others more boldly defended the addition; and in the end nothing was done. Meanwhile the Greeks, who only after a time had their attention drawn to the interpolated clause, were deeply offended;—offended at any change made in the Church's symbols by one portion only of the Church; and, engaged as they were in a battle for the truth against the dualistic heresies of the Eastern Manichæans, still more offended at the allowance thus given, as they said, to two originating fountains of Deity, or, as they charged the statement with implying, to a duality of Godhead. Let it be taught—for with this as many as were not seeking occasions of strife declared themselves content,—that the Holy Ghost

proceeds from the Father *by* the Son ; but that the Father is the one Beginning, Cause, and Source of Deity. Not in the withdrawal of the *Filioque* from the Creed, for that is now impossible, but in some such compromise as this—it was the compromise of the Council of Ferrara-Florence—the only hope of peace for the Churches so mournfully divided here, must lie. With all this I cannot refrain from adding that it is too sanguine an expectation that a settlement of the *Filioque* question would remove all the more serious difficulties between ourselves of the Anglican communion and the Greeks. So far from this, there lie behind, and would press immediately to the forefront, the questions of the Invocation of Saints, the worship of images, the cult of the Blessed Virgin ; all which will one day or another need to be faced. But to return.

The question of the single or double Procession, giving while it did a doctrinal basis to the antagonism between East and West, was yet far from being that which most hopelessly kept them asunder. Behind all other points of difference there was one which did its work more effectually than them all ; there was one claim which Rome was resolved that Constantinople should admit, the same which Constantinople was resolved never to admit—the claim, that is, of the Roman Pontiff to be recognized as supreme Arbiter in the whole Church, to whom every greater cause must be brought for final decision. The Churches of the West, among which that of Rome towered as the sole Apostolic, might learn little by little to acquiesce in such pretensions ; but not so the Eastern, and least of all that of Constantinople. If the Bishop of old Rome would endure no equal, the Patriarch of Constantinople, falling back on the Council of Chalcedon and its recognition of his equal dignity, would tolerate no superior ; and the more the usurping Roman Bishop made his rule felt

over the Churches of the West, and revealed the autocratic character of that rule, the more resolved were those of the East, Constantinople leading the way, to resist every attempt to place a similar yoke upon their necks. On other points a compromise was possible: an explanation might remove a theological difficulty; but it could do nothing here.

If the strain and stress of the approaching separation relaxed a little in the tenth century, it revived in strength in the eleventh; and in this the final catastrophe arrived. A violent writing of the Greek Patriarch, Michael Cerularius (1053), addressed primarily to a South Italian Bishop, but encyclic in its character, evoked a reply as violent on the part of the Roman Bishop. The Papal Legates at Constantinople could procure no satisfaction from the Patriarch there; and on July 16, 1054, they laid a writ of excommunication, well charged with anathemas against the Patriarch, on the high altar of St. Sophia. This was not, indeed, a state of things altogether novel, for already during the Monophysite controversy there had been a suspension of intercourse between East and West for thirty-five years—from 484 to 519. Nothing is so easy as cursing, and the Greek Patriarch retorted with anathemas against the Pope, the other Oriental Patriarchs making before long a common cause with him; and thus the Schism was at length consummated, which now after more than eight centuries have elapsed shows, at least as between Latin and Greek, no tokens of healing; and, more than all other causes combined, has delivered the fairest regions of the East, once the most favoured seats of the Church, to that bastard faith of Islâm, which now stands where it ought not, even there where, except for the sins and provocations of Christians, it never would have stood.

And yet in less than fifty years from the date of the Schism there befell the first of a long succession of events which, extending over nearly two hundred years, might have seemed to open in a wonderful manner a door of reconciliation and a way of peace. How could the Crusades fail in working a happy work, and in drawing again to one another, by the bonds of mighty benefits conferred and mighty benefits received, the hearts which had been for a while by various unhappy chances estranged from one another? So it might have been hoped. The Crusades had in effect an altogether opposite result. There was too often insolent violence on the part of the strong; with fraud and teachery on the side of the weak; and these efforts for the deliverance of the Christian East, even when made in good faith, only served to increase the exasperation, to separate from one another by mutual suspicions, and ere long by the sense of mutual injuries, the helpers and the holpen more widely than ever.

Most effectual of all for the defeating of any better hopes which such alliances between East and West might have encouraged was that disgraceful episode in the crusading story,—namely the temporary setting up of a Latin Empire at Constantinople. This Empire, under sentence of death from the beginning, lasted little more than half a century (1204—1262); but what a legacy of burning hate must it have left behind it, as the Greeks treasured up in their memories and revolved in their hearts the wrongs and the rapine, the profanation of all things accounted by them the most sacred, the insults and outrages innumerable, which during this time their Latin oppressors had with so prodigal a wantonness heaped on them and on their faith. Innocent III. may have flattered himself that by sanctioning and allowing, as after some faint remonstrance he did sanction and allow, that per-



ditions transpired at the seizure of Constantinople by the armies of the West, he was helping forward that reunion of the Churches which lay so near to his heart. He was indeed making a reunion, that anyhow was hard, many times harder: causing it, for centuries which have not yet run their full course, to be impossible.

It was long, however, before this impossibility was recognised by the so in the high places either of the East or the West. There were from time to time negotiations for the bringing of such a reunion to pass, and on both sides motives impelling to such a result. Thus, doubtless, it would have proved most grateful to the arrogance of Rome, if only she could add to the number of her vassals the obstinate rival who had contested her superiority so long. Nor is it less certain that the Byzantine princes, every day more hardly pressed by the Ottomans, their shrunken dominion ever growing less and less, as new limbs of it were torn violently away, on various occasions were sincerely anxious to arrive at such terms of agreement as should place the armies of Western Christendom at their service. This, however, was never more than a movement of the Court and, it might be, of a few courtly prelates and an obsequious Patriarch. Terms of agreement might be come to;—they were so more than once, at the Council of Lyons (1274) and again at that of Florence (1439): these, however, met with no acceptance, but rather indignant rejection. The Greeks in general, who found that so much was yielded, but little or nothing gained.

On this last occasion the Emperor John Palæologus, had himself accompanied by the Patriarch, and a large number of bishops, including the Patriarch, on a journey to Florence; and he and they, after drawing up a long and humiliating declaration of submission, returned home with them.

Dictated by the stronger party, this was little else than a thinly veiled surrender by the Greeks of all which for centuries had been in dispute between them and the Latins. Its terms were no sooner known than they were at once repudiated by the vast body of clergy and laity. All who had any hand in arranging them, all the 'Latin-minded' as they were called,—and there could be no worse accusation,—were denounced as traitors; Metrophanes the Patriarch, his name changed by popular hatred to Metrophonos, or The Matricide, being counted the worst traitor of all. And now the latest glimpse of hope that the aid so sorely needed might be obtained from the West disappeared. The destroyer was already on his way; and in less than fourteen years Constantinople, after the heroic defence of an Emperor who knew when and how to die, was taken (May 29, 1453); and the church of Justinian, desecrated to a mosque, has remained such to the present hour. Some three hundred years earlier the famous mosque of Cordova, with its pillars more numerous than the days of the year, had been transformed into a Christian church; but here was now a very lamentable redressing of the balance. At the same time this much must be said, namely that if Constantinople now fell, she fell because she had played her part and fulfilled her mission as the middle term, the link visibly connecting the ancient and the modern world; others being prepared now to occupy the room which she could no longer fill to any profit.

A very few words more before we leave this part of our subject. As the Western Church secured to itself a magnificent future by taking moral and spiritual possession of those Teutonic races which in the providence of God had been brought within the sphere of its influence, so the Eastern recognized as its mission the conversion of

the Slavonic tribes ; and found in them, and in the imparting of the Gospel to them, security for a future of its own,—a pledge that, however the Empire of the East might perish, the Church of the East should not perish with it. Admitting as we must that the missionary zeal of the Eastern Church fell below that of the Western, still it was very far from neglecting altogether the duty of imparting to others that precious truth of which it was itself the keeper. It thus came to pass that long before the overwhelming catastrophe of the fifteenth century, a nation destined to take an immense share in moulding the future history of the world had received from Constantinople the seeds of the Christian faith,—not indeed of that faith in all its primitive purity, for none can give better than they themselves possess ; but what it had, the Greek Church had freely given. I need hardly say that I refer to Russia. Almost everywhere in the East we move among the ghosts of an ecclesiastical greatness which has for ever vanished away. But while so much there belongs to an unreturning past, while the candlesticks of so many Churches have been removed, here are a nation and a Church, fresh and young, and only now beginning to play their part in the world's story. With Russia, and with the fortunes of Russia, the future of Eastern Christianity is manifestly bound up. What this future will be it is hard to guess ; that it is destined to be a remarkable one it is impossible to doubt.

You must learn from others the circumstances which brought about the conversion of Vladimir, to whom the Russian Church looks back and looks up as its founder (980). I can do no more than call your attention to the far-reaching significance of that event ; and this, whether we contemplate it as the drawing of Russia into Christendom, or more particularly as the drawing of it into *Eastern*

Christendom. If in far-reaching world-historic importance that conversion falls below the conversion of Clovis, it is very little wherein it falls below ; and perhaps the future may show that in the remoter consequences which it entailed, it did not fall a whit below. Even without Russia and the moral and material forces of Russia at its back, the 'Orthodox Church' would still be a power in the ecclesiastical and theological world. With Russia penetrated through and through by its influence it is a power, and a mighty one, in the political world as well ; and, if the signs of the times do not greatly deceive, every day will show this the more plainly.

## LECTURE XXVI.

*THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.*

WHEN we brand a long period of history, sometimes the whole medieval time, with the title of the Dark Ages, there is a large amount of injustice in this language ; just as, when we celebrate a Revival of Learning, the image which underlies this phrase may very easily be urged too far. A revival is a returning to life of that which was dead, or which seemed dead. But the activities of the human mind were by no means dead, nor yet in a state of suspended animation during those times ; neither were the helps to learning so few and insufficient, least of all during the later Middle Ages, nor the number who had really profited by these so small, as is often taken for granted. Many classical authors of Greece and Rome, whose writings were then, as they will always remain, the most efficient instruments of intellectual culture, had never been lost sight of in the West. To the scholars of those ages their Horace and Virgil and Juvenal, with other writers not a few, were quite as familiar as to the scholars of our own ; perhaps were enjoyed by them a good deal more, they having never known that sad satiety of books under which we suffer. The Greek masterpieces, it is true, were only accessible by means of imperfect translations ; but as a whole that ancient world of which these books spoke was known, not indeed with the fulness and accuracy wherewith it is possible to

know it now, but much better than is generally supposed. Already in the fourteenth century Dante (b. 1265, d. 1321) and Petrarch (b. 1304, d. 1374) had done much to extend a familiarity with the best Latin poets; and Boccaccio (b. 1313, d. 1375) something for awakening a wider interest in the literature of Greece; so that this Revival of which we are wont to speak as the glory of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was by no means a resurrection of classical learning as from the grave, nor even as an awakening of it from a trance. This awakening had made considerable advances already.

But with all these qualifications made, the significance of what was then coming to pass, the bearing that it had on the interests of the Church, must by no means be slighted or overlooked. It was not as the first spring, succeeding upon a long winter sleep; for that long winter sleep had been broken long ago; but it was a fuller outburst of the buds and blossoms in a more genial time. Many circumstances wrought together to give exactly at this epoch a new impulse to learning, to the study above all of Greek and Latin antiquity. Books, as I have said, were by no means so rare in the later Middle Ages as some would have us to believe—Dr. Maitland in his work on *The Dark Ages* should for ever have dissipated this notion, which is now inexcusable; but, admitting this, the Invention of Printing (about 1440)—a new gift of tongues we might be tempted to call it, if only it had been always turned to worthy uses—lent wings to knowledge, put within the reach of hundreds and presently of thousands precious lore which had hitherto been within the reach but of two or of three.

Nor were there absent any longer the living teachers and interpreters of that language and literature of Greece, the key to whose treasures men, however eager, might

scarcely without this aid have discovered for themselves. It is true that Greek scholars had not been wholly wanting in the darkest times and in the remotest West; Erigena, for example, and at a later day Roger Bacon and John of Salisbury; though the marvellous etymologies in which the latter indulges make it plain that he was less furnished with the knowledge of Greek than he supposed. But these had stood isolated and alone. In the cloisters, indeed, of Calabria, the old *Magna Græcia*, acquaintance with Greek had never quite died out—a Calabrian Bishop had been Petrarch's teacher in the language;—but on the whole the monastic recluses there had done little to spread an acquaintance with it beyond their own walls. Now, however, two events, these two indeed most closely connected with one another, brought about a large accession of teachers, well pleased to make others sharers in those riches of knowledge which are not diminished but rather multiplied by imparting. The first was the Council of Florence (1439); the second the Fall of Constantinople. I have already called your attention from another point of view to the latest endeavour at that Council to bring about a reconciliation of East and West, and to the motives out of which that endeavour sprang. It failed, as all previous attempts of a like kind had done; but the negotiations had brought many of the most learned Greek theologians and scholars to Italy, of whom some conformed to the Latin Communion and remained. Bessarion (b. 1396, d. 1472), Archbishop of Nicæa, afterwards a Roman Cardinal, and twice very nearly Pope, was perhaps the most illustrious of those who thus sought shelter betimes from the coming storm. Others, as Pletho the Neo-Platonist (d. 1452), did the same; and when, a few years later, the catastrophe actually arrived which a healing of the Schism should

have averted, and Constantinople fell before the arms of Mahomet II. (1453), the West,—and Italy above all,—was covered with the fugitives from the mighty ruin.

Some of these, escaping it might appear with no more than their lives, had yet saved out of the general wreck treasures of price, and such as made their welcome secure. Besides a living familiarity with the Greek tongue they brought with them manuscripts of Greek authors hitherto unknown, or known only by bald and imperfect translations, in the West. Constantinople, it is true, had created little in the way of a literature of her own during the last eight hundred years of her existence; but, ever since the remarkable quickening of interest in classical studies which signalized the close of the ninth century, Byzantine scholars had been very careful guardians of such riches of Greek literature as had not already perished,—had been diligent in the maintaining and multiplying of such traditionary knowledge as was needful for the right understanding of these which in the providence of God had been confided to her keeping. The day had now arrived which should show that this watchful care had not been exercised in vain.

The more distinguished among these refugees from the East were received with open arms, oftentimes with extravagant honours, by the princes of Italy :—as notably by Alfonso V., King of Naples (1442–1448); by Lorenzo the Magnificent (1472–1492) and other of the Medici at Florence; and at Rome by Popes such as Nicolas V. (1447–1455), founder of the Vatican Library; by Pius II. (1458–1464), better known as *Æneas Sylvius*, and, somewhat later, by Leo X. These, as they played the gracious host, little dreamt that they were welcoming and entertaining such as, without meaning any treacherous return for this kindness, should yet work to the dispensers of it no



little harm. Professorships, canonries, and not seldom posts higher still of academical honour or ecclesiastical dignity, were found for them. Not the famous cities of Italy alone, but almost every little town had its *Accademia*, the centre of classical studies and of a stirring intellectual life. Petty tyrants of the Romagna, retired condottieri like Malatesta, counted their little Court incomplete if it did not include one scholar of repute at the least. A passage in the *Essays* of Montaigne describes in a very instructive manner what at this time was going forward not in Italy alone, but over all Europe. 'My father,' he writes, 'set on fire by that new kind of earnestness, wherewith King Francis I. embraced letters and raised them into credit, did with great diligence and much cost endeavour to purchase the acquaintance of learned men; receiving and entertaining them as holy persons, and who had some particular inspiration of divine wisdom; collecting their sentences and discourses, as if they had been oracles; and with so much more reverence and religious regard, by how much less authority he had to judge of them: for he had no knowledge of letters, no more than his predecessors before him.'

A passage like this attests that it was not in Italy alone that this admiration for the New Learning and for the bearers of it was working. Still, as Italy was the cradle, so for a long while was it the principal seat of this newly awakened passion for the lore of the ancient world. It was no affected enthusiasm there. Affectations, insincerities enough may have clung to its skirts, as these ever cling to the skirts of a grand movement; but the enthusiasm itself was genuine; and Heeren has perfect right when he says, 'Men would have brought the Greek Muses to Italy, if they had not themselves

sought refuge there.' Thus, when Ficinus (d. 1499) burned a lamp continually before the bust of Plato, as others might have burnt one before the shrine of some saint, it was a fact, and a very significant one, which by this homage he expressed. But the movement did not remain an Italian one merely. It was not long before the more promising of the youth from all parts of Europe,—Colet and Linacre, for example, from England,—streaming over the Alps, sought to share such advantages as only the schools of Italy in fullest measure could offer; and to carry back to their own homes the precious lore which they there had acquired. It is impossible without liveliest interest to plant oneself in those times, when almost every day had its own discovery, and this of something more precious than the gold-mine and the diamond-field which constitute our chief surprises now—some precious manuscript brought to light and shaking off the dust of centuries, some new region of knowledge unfolding itself before the eyes of men.

When indeed one marks the immense influence which the old Græco-Roman world, its literature above all, so soon as this began to be intimately known, exercised on the thought and imagination of Europe, the intense homage which at once it commanded, one is compelled to own that it was well that familiarity with this literature did not earlier begin. This familiarity would inevitably have stunted, perhaps have killed, the original thought and productive energy of the Middle Ages, which the modern world could have done very ill without. Awestruck by the perfection of form which the masterpieces of the ancient world displayed, failing to realize of how much grander truths they were themselves the guardians, the men of those ages would have shrunk from entering into competition with the artists of an

elder time ; whose work showed so immeasurably above and beyond all whereunto they could hope to attain ; and in form did, no doubt, immensely transcend all which, except after long efforts and whole generations of comparative failures, they were likely to reach. It was permitted therefore to the Middle Ages to have their say, to utter all that was in their heart, before the veil was more than very partially withdrawn which hid from men's eyes the marvels of the old classical world.

'Humanists' was the title they bore who threw themselves without reserve into the study,—the worship shall we call it?—of classical antiquity. The name is a very instructive one. They claimed by it, for the studies which they pursued, that these contained the truest and highest culture of humanity, that through these what was most truly human in man would receive its highest development. It is worth while to ponder this name, for it at once reveals them to us in their strength and in their weakness ; what in them was worthy of all honour, and also where they went wrong, where, indeed, they were sure to go wrong ; what the perils were which beset these new pursuits, what the gains great and manifold which true religion might derive from them.

The dangers which lay in wait for those who too exclusively pursued these studies, did not fail soon to appear. A passionate and absorbing admiration for what was ancient, in other words for what was heathen, soon displayed itself in a visible estrangement on the part of most among the Italian Humanists, not so much from the Church as from Christianity, from the living Gospel of Christ. With the Church they were willing enough to keep terms. Many among them occupied its high places, enjoyed its emoluments ; indeed it is not too much to affirm that in the person of Leo X. a Humanist filled the

Papal Chair; his 'humanity' indeed consisting in little more than in laying out huge sums of money upon works of art. There were no deep moral convictions which drove them into opposition; no fire in their bones, so that they could not keep silence, seeing the things which they saw. Only let them be free to employ the shafts of their wit on the barbarous Latin of the Schoolmen, to hold up to ridicule the paltry squabbles of the Friars, and they were satisfied to leave unassailed the capital abuses of the time, being themselves in turn unassailed. Frivolous, profane, freethinking, having assimilated themselves only too faithfully to that heathen world which they so much admired, it is rare indeed to read that the Inquisition with all its activity troubled itself about them. For indeed Rome seldom persecuted mere laughers and mockers. She knew too well that she had nothing to fear from these; they were rather welcome to her than otherwise, as safety-valves for the escape of the indignation and scorn which, violently compressed, might have proved dangerous indeed. It was those who were in deep religious earnest whom she feared, and in whom, with a true instinct, she recognized her foes.

The Italian Humanists before very long showed unmistakably of what spirit they were, out of what root they grew. Their insatiable vanity, their bitter envyings one of another, their shameless adulation of the great of the earth,—adulation which, if it failed to bring its due return, they could exchange in a moment for the foulest abuse,—their writings so often steeped in the worst heathen impurities, and their lives to match, their denial of the primary truths not of the Christian religion only, but of all religion,—as the freedom of the will, the immortality of the soul, the judgment to come,—only too plainly attested this.

The rise of a new heathenism within the bosom of the Church—for it was often nothing short of this,—belonged almost exclusively to Italy, the corruptest portion of Christendom, as nearest to the centre of corruption. Savonarola saw the danger, and earnestly witnessed against it; but among the famous literati of Italy very few were with him. In other lands, in Germany and England, the revived interest in classical antiquity assumed a much healthier direction. To more than one it was given to consecrate the gold and silver which he had brought out of Egypt to the service of the tabernacle. The foremost among our English Humanists were Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England, and John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's. Melancthon (b. 1497, d. 1560), *Præceptor Germaniæ*, as he was called, and at an earlier day John Wessel (d. 1489) stand out as the truest German representatives; Erasmus as the Dutch. For these, and for others like-minded, this study took its true place; not as the final goal of all studies, but as a help and handmaid to that which is the queen of all, namely to Theology, or the knowledge of the true God. Here these better Humanists did excellent service. It, indeed, is hard to see how the Reformation could have done without them. Its strength lay in its appeal to the Word of God as above every doctrine and tradition of men: but, to make this appeal of any worth, the interpretation of Scripture must be established on sure foundations, so that no doubt may remain that its sense has been truly apprehended. Luther may have exceeded when he said, The best grammarian is the best theologian; but his words have their value notwithstanding.

The Humanists were thus most useful in hastening on the Reformation. They did some excellent service in the skirmishes which went before the battle; and even in the

battle itself, at the first closing and clashing of the opposing hosts. And yet from them as such, even where they had not degenerated into worshippers of the old mythologies,—and as such utterly heartless and insincere in any work for the true God,—a Reformation could never have proceeded. There were some abuses which they could clearly see and indignantly denounce, and in so doing they may have often found themselves in the same ranks with the true Reformers. But for the waging of a successful conflict with a system so mighty still as that of Rome, or indeed for the challenging of this to a conflict at all, there needed much more than an insight into the corruptions of that system. There needed the faith which overcomes the world; which counts God's truth dearer than the life itself; there needed an inward bleeding compassion for souls flattered and fed with hopes that would betray them; sent too often to the judgment seat of God with a lie in their right hand; and acquaintance with the illustrious writers of Greece and Rome gave none of these things; nay rather, when pursued to the exclusion of other studies, instead of kindling men's affections for the truth, cooled them rather. A Reformation carried out in their spirit, supposing that the motive power for effecting this could have been found, would have proved not a Reformation, but a Revolution; could have ended in nothing but in sheer unbelief.

Very instructive to us here, as showing that not from a Revival of Learning,—not from this alone, nor from this chiefly,—there should come effectual help for a suffering Church, is the history of Erasmus of Rotterdam (b. 1465, d. 1536), himself the chief of the Humanists, a king in the world of letters, and quite the most remarkable figure in the age which immediately preceded the Reformation. And the story of his life is the more full of teaching, see-

ing that he was very far from one of those half-pagan scholars, of whom I spoke just now. On the contrary, while he displayed a ceaseless activity in the editing and elucidating of classical authors, this heathen learning had not all, nor the best of his affections. The truth in Christ, so far as he had apprehended it, was dear to him. He did much with his pen for preparing the way of the Reformation ; and this not negatively only,—assailing some of the worst abuses of the Church, and the favourers of these, with the shafts of his pitiless wit ; but in ways more positive,—producing various works, editions of the Fathers, manuals of Christian faith and practice invaluable in their time, and, above all, publishing the first edition of the New Testament in the original language which had ever appeared. Its appearance indeed one cannot regard otherwise than as providentially timed, falling in as it exactly did with the year which immediately preceded the Reformation (1516). The first edition you will note that I have called it, for however Cardinal Ximenes' magnificent Polyglott (1513–1517) may have been printed before it, this edition by Erasmus was the first which saw the light. The work of Ximenes did not obtain a Papal sanction for its publication till the year 1522, five years after its illustrious editor's death.

So far most are agreed about him ; but his after attitude, when he stood face to face with the Reformation, has been very variously judged. Those who judge him the most hardly state the grounds of their judgment very much in language such as follows :—The foremost man of his time so long as the movement was mainly a literary one,—so soon as ever it assumed a more serious aspect, he declined to take any active share in it. He gave, indeed, to Luther a few words of encouragement at the outset ; but when he saw that the struggle

would be for life and death, he disengaged himself from it, saying with ignoble self-scorn that others might affect a martyrdom, he did not feel himself called to this honour. He would very gladly have persuaded the heads of the Church to abate some of its most crying and flagrant abuses ; but, finding them resolute to abide by these, he was not prepared to break with them altogether. And thus he lived far on into the Reformation period, occupying an ambiguous position, like the bat in the fable, disowned alike by the birds and by the beasts. He had too earnestly denounced the corruptions of the Church not to be regarded with dislike and suspicion by all who clung to these ;—it was he, they said, who laid the egg which Luther hatched. But he was regarded with a stronger dislike, one largely dashed with a well merited contempt, by as many as beheld in him one who, for the retaining of his worldly advantages, his favour with the great, his literary ease, had been untrue, as they contended, to his deepest convictions ; and who, after sounding a trumpet which summoned others to the battle, was not, when the battle joined, himself found in the ranks of the combatants.

Such was in the main the indictment drawn up against Erasmus in his own time ; and in language not very different from this many speak about him in ours. It is not without its measure of truth ; while yet considerations are here left out, whose omission is not altogether just. Erasmus, let it be remembered, did not begin his career as a Reformer,—and it was only by the way and by accident that he was such,—but as a Humanist ; and in the main he was faithful throughout to the duties which this name imposed. One may wish that he had looked higher and seen deeper. Yet when he refused to advance any farther, and separated himself and his fortunes from those



of the more ardent Reformers, this was not a stopping short upon his part at the prospect of danger on a line whereupon he had hitherto been travelling, but a refusal to allow himself to be violently transported from his own line to quite another, to one upon which he had never professed to travel; for he had always declared that a Reformation in Luther's sense and carried out in his spirit involved so much of danger, might be attended with such frightful calamities, as would far outweigh any problematical good which was to be gotten from it. There may have been, I am sure there was, a more excellent way than that which he chose; but I am persuaded also that it is easy to say things about Erasmus, and to judge judgments about him, which shall be harsher and more full of reproach than the actual facts of the case, if weighed in the balances of Christian equity, would warrant.

## LECTURE XXVII.

*CHRISTIAN ART IN THE MIDDLE AGES.*

I HAVE written elsewhere as follows, and will venture to repeat myself here, the book from which I quote having been long out of print :—‘ How little could friend or foe of the new-born Faith have foreseen, that out of it there should unfold itself a poetry infinitely greater, an art infinitely higher, than the old world had ever seen ; that this Faith, which looked so rigid, so austere, even so forbidding, should clothe itself in forms of grace and loveliness such as the world had never dreamt of before ; that poetry should not be henceforward the play of the spirit, but its holiest earnest ; that those artless paintings of the catacombs had the prophecy in them of more wondrous compositions than man’s eyes had ever seen ; or that a day should arrive when above many a dark vault and narrow crypt, where now the Christian worshippers gathered in secret, should arise domes and cathedrals embodying loftier ideas, because ideas relating to the Eternal and the Infinite, than all those Grecian temples which now stood so fair and so strong ; but which aimed not to lift men’s hearts and minds from the earth which they adorned.’

Time, however, was needed for the bringing about these results undreamt of at the first. During the three earliest centuries the mere question of existence had taxed all the energies of the Church, which had thus little

thought or care to bestow on aught which was not vital to her. When a distinguished French statesman was asked what he had done during the Reign of Terror, his reply was, 'I lived (*j'ai vécu*)';—implying that this was exploit enough in such an evil time. The Church, in like manner, 'lived' during those days of trial; and, so far as Art was concerned, more could not well be demanded of her. With Constantine the condition of things was altogether changed. Emerging from the catacombs she sought to clothe herself in an outward beauty that should bear some faint correspondence to that spiritual beauty of which she was conscious within. As was natural, her earliest efforts were to adopt and appropriate forms which she found ready made to her hands; to try whether she could not subdue these to her own uses, fill these with her own spirit. That she should make this attempt was inevitable; but inevitable too that a very partial success, at the best, should attend it. The outer form and the inner spirit of any true work of art are so closely bound up together, the one being not so much the vesture as the incarnation of the other, that the contradiction which here made itself felt between the heathen form and the Christian spirit effectually wrought for the injury, often for the entire marring, of both.

Thus nothing can be poorer than the Christian poetry written during the fourth and fifth centuries in the old classical metres. As we read the hexameters of Juvencus or Sedulius, there is a constant sense of unfitness, of incongruity between the form and the spirit, as of new wine poured into bottles stiff and old, to the spoiling of both alike; while with Christian alcaics and sapphics it fares, if possible, worse. Even Prudentius, who was a poet of true genius, and who was nearer success than any other, cannot be said to have more than very partially succeeded.

It was not till the classical framework of Latin verse was wholly shattered, quantity absolutely ignored and accent substituted in its stead, the latent powers of rhyme being at the same time evoked, that Christian Latin poetry effected anything. It attained, indeed, under the new conditions which it had thus made for itself a perfection which fills with astonishment all who are capable of forming a judgment on the matter, as they contemplate this second birth of Latin song; this rejuvenescence of a language and a literature which had seemed to have fulfilled their course, and to have uttered long since all which was in their heart to utter.

The complete failure of all attempts to compel the old to serve the needs of the new became ever plainer as the Church grew more and more conscious of her ideal dignity, of her superiority to the world around her and to the world she had left behind her. With such hopes and aspirations as now were hers she could less and less endure to be trammelled by old traditions, to be straitened and shut in by rules and limitations, whose justice or necessity she did not herself acknowledge. As time went on she more and more transgressed, broke through and defied these rules, even while as yet she had nothing better of her own to substitute in their stead. Detaching herself in the end from the old Græco-Roman world, and entering on untrodden paths of her own, she ventured on a grand but hazardous experiment, and one which found its best vindication in the success which crowned it:—how far, that is, she could array herself in garments of grace and beauty which her own hands had wrought, for ever laying aside, however rich and gorgeous they might appear, such as, not having been made for her, at the best imperfectly became her, and often did not become her at all.

It was not till about the fifth century that the Church gave any clear intimations that she would thus develop an independent art of her own. The tokens of any such intention on her part displayed themselves first, as was inevitable, in the matter which was most immediately urgent, in the houses, that is, which she was now free to rear to Almighty God, and which she could not therefore leave any longer unbuilt. There were many reasons why the heathen temples should not be the models which she chose for imitation. That they were quite too small, being often little more than the shrine of the god or goddess to whom they were dedicated, would have been reason enough; but there was a deeper moral objection behind. The heathen temples were too closely linked with the service of false gods, in other words of devils, were haunted with too many impure associations and profane reminiscences to be welcome or even tolerable to the faithful of those days.

There was less in the basilicas of Pagan Rome to offend and to repel. These were long rectangular buildings, divided along their whole length sometimes by two, not seldom by four lines of columns; and serving as courts or halls where justice was administered, while they were also in their spacious room places of general resort, where, as in a mart or exchange, the business of this world was transacted. We are often told that the early Christians, those I mean of the four and fifth centuries, obtained from the grace of favouring Emperors some of the existing basilicas, which by them were then dedicated to uses higher than any which they hitherto had known. This, however, has never been proved. What is certain is that the churches which were now built were fashioned upon the pattern of the basilica,—with only such modifications as enabled them to satisfy the higher demands

of that new service to which they were put, and to be indeed, according to the prophecy wrapt up in their name, houses of the Great King. A serious and stately edifice the basilica at the outset was,—as indeed, whatever changes it might undergo, it never ceased to be; truly Roman in its character; primarily designed for use; plain and unadorned without, yet not rejecting beauty within, so far as beauty was content to wait upon utility. I should be passing out of the region of history into that of Christian antiquities were I to attempt to trace the steps by which a building, originally serving mundane purposes, was transformed into one serving heavenly; the roof little by little reared to loftier heights; arms thrown out to the right hand and the left, so to yield ampler space for the crowds of worshippers who thronged its courts; these arms, or transepts as they came to be called, impressing, without intending anything of the kind, a cruciform shape upon the building, which was not the less welcome because it came thus unsought; meanwhile what had been the Prætor's seat in the recess at the eastern end suggested the spot where now should be the Bishop's throne, with the presbyters, his assessors, ranged in semicircle round him; the Arch of Triumph, as it was called, grandly leading up to all this. Much more there is well worthy to be noted in the readiness with which the basilica lent itself to all the needs of Christian worship and discipline; so that even after houses of God, sublimer and more original in conception, had risen up at the bidding of mightier artists than such as fashioned these, it still kept and keeps its place as an abiding form of Christian architecture. St. Peter's at Rome, as I need hardly remind you, before the building of Michael Angelo superseded it, was a basilica; as is St. Paul's without the Walls, and the church of Maria Maggiore; these with that

of St. Apollinaris at Ravenna being the grandest of the churches in this kind that exist.

The basilica in its severe simplicity belonged, as we have seen, to the West. The style which we call Byzantine was born, as its name imports, in the East ; or, at any rate, was an Eastern modification of a Western edifice. Everything leads us to the conclusion that, up to the time of Justinian, the ecclesiastical architecture of New Rome differed little, if at all, from that of the Old. Justinian himself reared many basilicas. But the edifice by which he obtained a name for himself as one of the most eminent church-builders of the world, excelling, as was his own boast, even Solomon himself,—is St. Sophia's at Constantinople (537). It would be too much to say that this is the actual model upon which the whole church-building of the East has since been modelled ; but it has certainly made its influence felt throughout all, has moulded and modified all. At Ravenna, the Byzantium of the West, the glorious church of St. Vitalis (526–547) will give no unworthy notion to as many of us as have never travelled farther eastward, of what this style at its highest can effect.

With whom the idea originated of grafting an entirely novel feature on the basilica, one dominating every other, sometimes indeed being the sole feature, that namely of a central dome,—‘ the spreading cupola, the liveliest copy which men's skill could frame of the vault of heaven ’ (Freeman),—with whom, I say, the honour of this invention lay, it is impossible to affirm ; but New-Roman or Byzantine, and not Old-Roman, it certainly was. In Agrippa's Pantheon at Rome one element of the grandeur of the dome had been anticipated, namely its vastness ; not however its elevation ; for the dome of the Pantheon, springing from low walls, makes no effort to lift itself

from earth to heaven. The rearing of the dome to those astonishing heights, till it stood as a heaven within the heaven,—this was the novelty. In this, and in the successful mastering of all the constructive difficulties which this presented, its main glory consisted.

At the same time, sublime as the church of Justinian is, this, and the other churches innumerable which are formed on its pattern, have a weakness and drawback of their own. Thus, not to dwell on mere technical embarrassments,—on the enormous weight of the cupola thus suspended high in air, needing as this did piers the most massive to sustain it, and calling for various artifices which yet must be kept out of sight,—other faults clung to it, and these reaching nearer to the heart of things. As in the Byzantine State, so in the church of the true Byzantine type, everything is centralized. The dome, and the space immediately beneath the dome, is all ; or, at best, everything else is secondary and subordinated to this. There is no leading up of the heart and eye to the Eastern end and to the principal mysteries which are celebrated there, to the Sun of Righteousness that might be looked for as rising from that quarter with healing on his wings : indeed in many of the Byzantine churches the Holy Table stands immediately under the central dome, while all those arrangements for divine worship and for the distribution of the worshippers which grew so naturally out of the basilica, have been disturbed ; new ones, that only partially fulfil their object, needing to be substituted in their room. The Byzantine church is but the basilica with one magnificent Oriental feature added to it, and that feature only imperfectly adapting itself to the purposes for which the building was designed. The Orient, for Ravenna, as far as church architecture is concerned, must be regarded as an Oriental city, was the region in which



it moved and reigned,—a much narrower region than that which the basilica claimed as its own.

With the eleventh century a new era of church-building begins. The apathy which possessed the minds of men as the conclusion of a Millennium drew near, persuaded as multitudes were that with the year 1000 the world would come to an end, and that therefore all labour, except for the supply of immediate necessities, was labour in vain,—this apathy passed away, and men breathed anew, when it was plain that the end was not yet. It was succeeded, so soon as the fatal term was left behind, by a prodigious burst of activity, showing itself in a thousand ways. In no domain did this display itself more signally than in that of Christian architecture. ‘Arise, let us build,’ is everywhere the word. But what men built was not the old Roman basilica, and as little the domical structure of Byzantium; while yet in the new style—Romanesque it is called—borrowing, as it does, features from both, they were brought into fruitful combination.

The life of Romanesque architecture, as compared to that of other styles, was comparatively brief. It did not keep its place in the front of things for quite two centuries, say from the eleventh to the end of the twelfth. During this time it diverges into two branches, with features enough in common to justify an including of them under a common name, but at the same time of a marvellous diversity. There is a Northern Romanesque, of a grand and austere simplicity, in harmony with that stern and rugged North which it adorns. Durham and Caen may be accepted as the crowning glories of this, as St. Mark’s at Venice and the cathedral of Pisa of the more ornate Southern Romanesque. If we regard the Basilican as the first, and the Byzantine as in chronological succes-

sion the second order of Church architecture, the Romanesque will constitute the third. Lombard it is sometimes called, but by a misnomer; neither is Secondary Roman, which some have named it, to be praised. 'I claim,' Mr. Freeman has said, 'for Romanesque to be looked on neither as debased Roman nor as imperfect Gothic; but as a genuine independent style, of which Italy and Norman England produced two varieties of coequal merit.' With all its grace and beauty it is stern and strong; but its chief characteristic is delight in the multiplication of the arch, and this not merely for support, but for the ornamentation of the building. Within and without there is the same prodigal employment of this form. But the arch is round, and chiefly used for decoration. There is no hint as yet of the immense structural effects, drawing after them other effects more marvellous still, which by the employment of the pointed arch might be secured.

Christian architecture had done many wonderful things; but it had not spoken its last word, nor shown all that was in its heart to do, until the unfolding toward the close of the twelfth century of that which is as 'the bright consummate flower,' the crown and completion of all that had gone before,—the style which, satisfying at once the aspirations of the Christian spirit and the exigences of art, has adorned all Middle Europe, and indeed as far north as Drontheim, with those cathedrals which are at once the admiration and the despair of the after world. Marvellous indeed the enthusiasm must have been that covered in a few years the whole of Northern Europe with churches and cathedrals, which, whatever wondrous births the future may have in reserve, will never in their own kind be surpassed or equalled. To these and to the defraying of the enormous cost which these entailed, the faithful did not contribute merely their silver

and their gold ; for now this zeal for the building of glorious churches did something to fill the place in men's hearts which the cessation of the Crusades had left void—satisfying as it did in part, and however imperfectly, the yearning desire to make some personal sacrifice for God. He who could not now any more under the walls of Acre or by the shores of Gennesaret war down the infidel, could yet endure some little measure of hardship, as not a few of the great and noble of the earth, high-born men and women, were content to do, carrying the mortar, or helping to drag the huge stones, or contributing in some other humblest form of personal service to the rearing of a house, which like Solomon's Temple demanded to be very magnificent, as being reared to the King of kings. The name of Gothic, by which we now call this style, is, as learners are often reminded, an absurd misnomer ; having been originally a random term of contempt equivalent to barbarous, given to this birth of the genius of the North by the Italians of the Renaissance, who had no eye for the glory of it, and no faith in any styles but those which had been handed down from the antient classical world. Vasari (d. 1564) is reported, I know not how truly, to have been the first to make this application of the word. It is not a misnomer only, but a misleader as well,—saying at once too much and too little. It says too much, for Goths had nothing to do with its invention ; any people called by this name having disappeared centuries before from the earth. It says too little, seeing that it makes no attempt to seize and to express the chief characteristics of this style. It is not the less true that to find the appropriate name is not so easy. Ogival, borrowed from the French use, is quite too hard a word ; and, though it does not suggest error, has the disadvantage, not quite so serious, but serious enough,

of suggesting, to us at least, nothing. Romantic, which has been sometimes proposed, may be dismissed at once ; defects quite as serious cleave to it as to Gothic. Then too, being, as this style of architecture is, an explosion of genius nearly simultaneous in Germany and in Northern France, to call it German would be unjust to France, which, pointing to Chartres, to Rheims, to Amiens,—that trilogy unique in grandeur of conception and perfection of detail,—to Notre Dame of Paris, and to many more, might justly complain that the whole question of the priority of invention was thus, without so much as a hearing granted, given against her. At the same time, calling it French, we might be doing an equal wrong to Spirens, to Cologne, to Strasburg, and to other cathedrals not unworthy to be named in the same breath with these.

I can suggest nothing better than that which is already so commonly done, namely to give this style its name from the pointed arch which is its distinguishing feature and the key to its marvels ; for while it is quite true that this arch was not now employed for the first time, it never played a foremost part till now. Like almost everything which is destined to exercise a mighty and permanent influence, it came not with observation, but entered unnoticed and at unawares into the world. Brought in all likelihood from the East, and domiciled first in Sicily, it was only after a while that the capabilities of decorative beauty and constructive power latent in it were revealed. Neither is there any exact moment and place of which we can say that then and there the pointed arch was first employed. Existing side by side with the round arch, and suggested, as some have fancied, —Gray, I believe, was the first to suggest it,—by the intersection of two such arches, it was only by steps which

cannot always be accurately traced, that, wrestling for a while in conflict with this, it finally won the day, and winning that, was free to claim a future of unparalleled magnificence for its own. For indeed what difficulties now were solved, what possibilities of grandeur and beauty were now brought within reach ! It seemed as if there was nothing which the wielder of these new powers had not audacity to attempt, and skill to attain. Hitherto the architect had feared to weaken overmuch walls with such weights to support, and by narrow apertures had allowed such light as was necessary to enter ; but now the graceful flying buttress, itself not an eyesore but an ornament, allowed him to pierce with immense openings the side walls of the building, thus admitting floods of light ; this not the garish light of our common day, but a light dim and religious, duly toned and tempered by its transmission through the richly coloured glass just at this time so opportunely invented, and wherewith the windows were filled. All fear of laying too heavy a weight on the arches might now be dismissed. The pressure, not so much lateral as perpendicular, was comparatively easy to deal with. Higher and still higher in an ever more aerial perspective rose the principal lines of the Gothic cathedral,—lines no longer horizontal, level that is with the earth and never losing their nearness to it ; but vertical, climbing up from the low huts and squalid lanes of the medieval city into the clear blue vault of heaven, themselves a *Sursum corda* uttering itself in stone. Words are weak to express the marvel and the glory of the buildings which in emulous rivalry covered in a little while the face of Germany, of Northern France, of England. For the building which now took shape, obedient to the architect's wand as to a new Amphion's lyre, was not merely a stupendous fabric of richest elabo-

ration, of almost inconceivable boldness of conception. It was in all its parts, in great and in small, a symbolism, —the embodiment in material forms of an idea, and that immeasurably the grandest which the world has known ; the idea, that is, of the kingdom of God ; a spiritual poem taking visible shape and fashion before the eyes of men ; admitting the richest variety in detail, but as much under the dominion of an ever present and ever active law as the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, and like it a poetry and a theology in one.

But while it fared thus upon our side of the Alps, the Renaissance was more and more making itself felt in Italy, and not least in modifying the character of Italian Church architecture. There was a return to the old classical forms ; not indeed to these pure and simple, for it was impossible to ignore altogether all that had been accomplished during the last thousand years, but to these forms in the main. Whatever the genius of a Bramante, a Brunelleschi, a Michael Angelo could bring about,—whatever dimensions the most stupendous, the most lavish employment of costliest materials, of the richest marbles, of the most elaborate mosaics, of gold and of silver, could effect,—nothing of this was wanting. But the essential character of the Renaissance, that which was at once its strength and its weakness, namely that it owned this present world as the sphere wherein it was well satisfied to move and did not reach out after a higher, that it aimed to bring down heaven to earth, not to lift up earth to heaven, made itself felt here, as it did in every other province and domain of art. St. Peter's at Rome astonishes and imposes, but fails altogether to strike with religious awe ; nor can one ever recall without a pang that wonderful basilica which it displaced. The same may be said, though not quite so strongly, of the

cathedral of Milan, which must be regarded as the point where Northern or Gothic and Southern or Italian art met and mingled.

I have dwelt so long on the Christian architecture of the Middle Ages, that little time is left me to speak of their other arts. And yet I have only assigned to it that larger portion of our time which it might fairly challenge; for Architecture is most truly *the* fine art of the Middle Ages; the queen to whom all other arts are but as handmaids. It was not, in fact, till the twelfth century that churches began to be decked with sculpture at all; which for a long time after remained merely a subsidiary ornament. Statues may fill every niche within and without of a cathedral,—there are said to be four thousand in that of Bourges,—and certainly none can deny the magnificent decorative effects, and often the profound symbolism of the splendid series of sculptures which adorn the west fronts of so many of the French cathedrals; but for all this, Sculpture is there in the service of a greater than itself; and it is not till the Middle Ages are nearly spent that it claims (first I should say in Donatello, b. 1383, d. 1466) an independent existence of its own.

Painting too remains for a long while in the background, and in a subordinate position, though not so completely as does Sculpture. As compared with this it shows itself capable of rendering service which, for reasons that lie very deep, Sculpture is incapable of yielding. This in all ages has been strongly felt. The Greek Church, indeed, for which pictures are favourite assistances to devotion, and which has passed through such terrible trials rather than suffer these to be wrested from her, absolutely disallows raised sculptural representations of things sacred either in the church or in the

house. This superiority of Painting over Sculpture in the sphere of religious art, and preference which it has thus obtained, is sufficiently intelligible. Of these sisters Sculpture is the more sensuous, Painting the more spiritual. Sculpture too is subject to various limitations from which Painting is free ; colour is wanting to it, and atmosphere, the oppositions of darkness and light, the background of natural scenery, the suggestion of vast distances, the grandeur of immense multitudes gathered to a single spot and under the stress of a common emotion. And then, if the beauty of the human form is that which more than all else Sculpture aims at reproducing, it can never in the Christian Church be forgotten that there is a worm at the root of this beauty ; that in all save One it is from the first bound over to decay and death and to all the dishonour of the grave. The heathen world did not feel this ; or in its passionate worship of mere physical beauty contrived to forget it. Admiring too, but not reverencing, the body, it had no scruple about setting forth the beauty of the human form without covering or concealment ; or, what scruple and hesitation it felt for a while, this had long since been dismissed : while in Christian art,—in art, that is, which stood under the immediate influence of religion,—such an absence of honourable shame was inconceivable. All this explains how it came to pass that Sculpture exercised a far more potent spell on the heathen world than it exercises upon us ; while the modern or Christian world, yielding the palm of excellence in this domain of art, claims in Painting to have attained an excellence, to have evoked creations of grace and beauty whereof the antique heathen times did not so much as dream.

A few words in conclusion. Certainly it is a very



narrow temper which finds fault with the employment by the Church of those ancillary helps, adorning and beautifying, which Art supplies. We may heartily welcome these helps ; but, as a general rule, only upon one condition—namely, that no more is used of them than it may be fairly expected that the worshippers will be able to absorb and take up in such a reasonable service as He who is Spirit demands on the part of his worshippers. Some words of the Cambridge Platonist, Henry More, seem to me to express excellently well what are the due limits which the artistic element in worship should not overpass :—‘ Such,’ he says, ‘ is the truth and simplicity of the Christian religion, that if the authority of the Church think good to recommend any additional circumstances of divine worship, they must not be for ineffectual pomp and show, but for real use and edification, affecting such a beauty and comeliness as Nature does in living creatures, whose pulchritude is the result of such a symmetry of parts and tenour of spirits as implies vigour and ability to all the functions of life. And truly there should be no more ceremony in the Church than the use thereof may be obvious to understand, and the life and power of holiness may thoroughly actuate ; that our minds may not be amused, lost, sunk in, or fixed upon, any outward things here, but be carried from all visible pomps to the love and admiration of our Blessed Saviour in Heaven, and of that heavenly and divine life that He came into the world to beget in the hearts of all true believers.’ It would be untrue, in my judgment, to maintain that the limits here laid down were not in the ages with which we are dealing often overpassed. Let religious art have all the honour, the measure of wonder and admiration which are its due ; certainly I have not sought to detract from or to diminish these ; at the same time I cannot

forbear from expressing my conviction that the Church's ritual, with all its glorious accessories, was often, so to speak, as some glass, opaque where it should have been translucent, and stopping for itself the rays of light which it should have been satisfied to transmit to others. The Puritan excess was a not unnatural reaction against the æsthetic in worship, developed as this last was to an extent only to be justified if the higher spiritual worship had advanced hand in hand with it; which assuredly was not always or nearly always the case.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

*ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK IN THE  
MIDDLE AGES.*

CHRISTIAN Life and Work in the Middle Ages, a subject which properly treated might fill volumes, and whose study might occupy the larger part of a life, we are here to deal with and dismiss in a Lecture. I can only hope to make such Lecture profitable to you at all by restricting myself to a few points which stand out as the most prominent, being content to pass by innumerable others without notice. Some little knowledge I may thus hope to impart. Attempting more, I should probably not attain even this little.

When we attempt to compare the Middle Ages in their religious aspect with the ages which have succeeded them, there is error and exaggeration on either side into which it is abundantly easy to fall. There is the error and exaggeration on one side of glorifying those ages over much, extolling them as ‘ages of faith,’ with a tacit subaudition that all which come after have been ages of scepticism or of unbelief,—into which Roman Catholics more often run. There is on the other side the error of unduly depreciating those ages,—to which Protestants are most addicted. There is much to explain and account for both excesses. Thus if some set these ages too high, this is not seldom the reaction of generous spirits, who

feel that injustice has been done them, and who, instead of seeking to redress the scales, and to bring them to an equilibrium, disturb them in the opposite direction. Nor is this the only explanation. Doubtless in the ages of which we speak religion claimed to mingle as a present influence, penetrating and pervading the every day life of men, far more than now it does. Reminders in one shape or another of a higher world-order, behind that world of shows and phantoms in the midst of which we move, were far more numerous then; nor can it be denied that the world is now left in the exclusive possession of domains of human existence which Faith once claimed, in part or wholly, as her own. Yet in measuring age against age it is often forgotten, and no where so often as here, that the outward manifestations of religion may be, and have been before now, not the effluence and utterance of its inner spirit, but a substitute for it. Thus in lands where the medieval tradition is the strongest we see not seldom an entire divorce between religion or outward devoutness and morality, and this without any conscious hypocrisy on their parts who are religious without being moral. The Italian brigand wears little leaden saints in his hat; he has some favourite shrine at which his devotions are duly paid: and all this with no slightest sense of the tragic contradictions between one half of his life and the other. Gasparone, who closed his career not very long ago in a Roman prison, had committed some two hundred murders; but, as the peasantry who were lost in admiration of his career boasted, never one on a Friday. We may then freely accept the fact that life was more thronged and crowded with religious observances in the Middle Ages than it is now, without accepting this as a convincing proof that a larger proportion of those who professed the faith of Christ owned the obligations

of God's moral law, and ordered their lives in conformity with it, then than now.

But, as I have said, it is not the admirers of medieval Christianity only who thus exceed. There is another extreme; that namely of so dwelling on what was amiss and out of joint in those times,—the scandals, the offences, the disorders, the superstitions,—that we lose sight altogether of the work of grace and power which the great Head of the Church was then, as at all times, carrying forward in the hearts of his people. Those tempted to lose sight of this would do well to study a little more closely in their spiritual aspects some centuries in which, as men are wont to tell us, the light was the least, and the love had grown the coldest. Without changing their mind about the presence of evil in those centuries, and this evil in amounts terrible to think of, they will perhaps change their mind about the absence of good. The tenth century has a very bad reputation with Church historians, as among the Dark Ages the darkest of all,—an age, as Baronius describes it, in which Christ was indeed still in the Ship, and therefore it was not submerged; but in which He must be taken to have been sleeping there. I have no desire to question this verdict; and yet, when we know that dark and evil time a little more nearly, what noble figures it reveals. What grander company of Christian men and women, and these occupying the thrones of the earth, would any where greet us than greet us here:—Otto the Great, and Brun, Archbishop of Cologne, his brother; these two, the layman and the priest, working so zealously together for the spread of Christian missions among the wild heathen races that raged and stormed round the fortress of German Christianity; while, completing this royal group, there is Matilda, the mother of these; and Otto's queen, well worthy to share his toils

and his throne, our English Edith, granddaughter and undegenerate scion of Alfred the Great.

Or take that cruel and wicked fifteenth century—an unlovely time, if such there was ever. Itself the interval which separates two eras, it displays all the evils that usually wait upon such times of transition; upon times, that is, when the old, although all or nearly all its virtue has gone out of it, is not yet dead and buried out of sight, but still haunts and cumpers the earth; while the new and the better is uncertainly feeling its way, and only little by little learning to use the powers and fulfil the duties which have lapsed to it. Regard that age, with all its cruelties and crimes; do not hide your eyes from any of these, but at the same time do not forget that it was the century of Thomas à Kempis, of Gerson, of Hus, of the author of the *German Theology*, of Joan of Arc, of the Brethren of the Common Life, of Savonarola. It was a century in which one, giving an account of the state of piety round him, could say, ‘It is a laudable custom with many of both sexes, and these not of the humbler classes only, but magnates and nobles, to set apart at least one hour at some set time of every day for the recalling and meditating on that highest benefit bestowed on the human race, the passion of Christ.’ It were much to be desired that so laudable a custom of the fifteenth century had not become nearly extinct in the nineteenth. We do ourselves, we do the Church of Christ much wrong, when we fail to recognize and to dwell with thankfulness and praise on the grand and beautiful souls which in every age have been trained by Him for his heavenly kingdom. What mightier attestation of the divine character of Christ’s religion than the fact that all which men have so perversely mingled of superfluous or mischievous with it, has not robbed it of its power to heal

and to bless, that in every age elect souls are being fashioned in it as polished corners for the temple not made with hands?

The Church of the Middle Ages, as indeed has been the case with the Church in other ages as well, was on several occasions arrested in the downward path of spiritual declension and decay, quickened to a new life, by what we should now call a Revival. The Revivals of those times may not have been, and were not in all or nearly all their details, revivals exactly after the pattern which we, with our clearer lights, though perhaps not stronger affections, might wish them to have been; but seeing that unhappily we cannot reform our ancestors, we must take such 'times of refreshing' as they were, giving credit to them for all which they had of healthy and good; and heartily regretting that what cannot be qualified as such made any part in them, leaving them, as no doubt it did, less fruitful of abiding good than they otherwise would have been.

Thus, to enumerate a few of the beneficent waves of high spiritual emotion which in the ages wherewith we have to do, swept over Western Christendom, there was the revival of the better elements of monastic life, the recovery of discipline, the rekindling of zeal, whereof the religious foundation of Clugny was the centre and the hearth (910). There was again, when this revival had spent itself a little, the Cistercian reform, in which St. Bernard (b. 1091, d. 1153) led the way. Of these both I have spoken already: Again, there were the Crusades, which we as much misconceive when we take no account of the nobler and purer impulses that were at work in them, as when we see in them no other impulses but these. There were the early days of the Mendicant Orders, with so much of promise about them that wise

men and good hailed in them the dawn of a far more glorious day than, as it proved, they should ever usher in. There was the Scholastic Philosophy for those who sought to know that they might love, and the Mystic Theology for those who sought to love that they might know;—nor do these at all exhaust the list.

It may be hard, nay impossible for us to find ourselves in some of the manifestations of the piety of those days, so strange and sometimes so eccentric they appear to us. Nay more—allegiance to that truth which God has taught us may compel us without reserve to condemn some shapes which this piety assumed, to separate ourselves altogether from these. But we shall ourselves be the chief losers, if we cannot in thought and esteem discern between the fine gold meet for the Master's use and the dross which may have mingled with it, but whose lot is to perish in the same crucible that refines and purifies the gold. A few words then here respecting the blemishes which cleaved to the Medieval Revivals, and, without destroying, more or less impaired their worth. Certainly the most serious of these blemishes was the immense development of the worship of the Blessed Virgin which signalized so many among them. The growth of this cult, the causes that led to it, the shapes that it assumed, how far the Nestorian controversy set it forward, and how far the Iconoclast, all this it is impossible for me historically to treat of; but it is a phenomenon of these ages, and by them bequeathed to the ages succeeding, altogether too significant to be passed over with merely a transient notice. It would be long to record the cycle of greater feasts instituted in her honour, a cycle not counted complete till it had reached the mystical number seven, including one which celebrated her Assumption into heaven on the third day after her death; it would be endless to



recount innumerable lesser feasts and local devotions. One Order, that of the Carmelites, invented her scapular, another, the Dominican, her rosary. Titles of honour were invented for her, as Queen of Heaven, Queen of Angels, Star of the Sea, Dispenser of the graces of God, Mother of Pity, Mistress of the World, Refuge of Sinners, Gate of Heaven, which not merely had no sanction in Scripture, but had no analogy in anything there. And yet Scripture was ransacked that so it might yield prophetic or mystic anticipations of the glories which should be hers. She was the new and the better Eve; and in the *Ave* of the Angelic Salutation there was traced a significant reading backward of the name of another, from whom and from whose disobedience all death had proceeded, in favour of a better Eva, from whom and from whose obedience all life had flowed. Miriam and Deborah and Judith and Esther were all prophetic types of her. She was the Wisdom that builded her house with the seven pillars (Prov. ix. 1); the Bride of the Canticles, this Song of songs being an epithalamium of which she is the object; and the Woman clothed with the sun and having the moon beneath her feet (Rev. xii. 1); and she, the Ever Virgin, was the East gate of Ezekiel's Temple, whereby the Prince of the people having entered once, it should henceforward be shut for evermore (Ezek. xlv. 2). Jacob's ladder, linking earth to heaven (Gen. xxviii. 12), was a mystic symbol of her; and the Ark of the Covenant; and the Bush that burned and was not consumed (Exod. iii. 2); and Aaron's rod that budded (Num. xvii. 8); and Gideon's fleece (Judg. vi. 37); with much more in like kind.

But Scripture was submitted to worse usage than this. It was directly falsified so to do her the more honour. A profane travestie of the Psalter, sometimes ascribed

to Bonaventura, but not the work of the 'Seraphic Doctor,' was a favourite book of devotion in these ages. In this, to take one sample, the opening words of the 110th Psalm, 'The Lord said unto my Lord,' reappear as 'The Lord said unto my Lady;' with the rest to match. After such handling of the word of God, it will sound as a small matter that the Church's noblest hymn should be dealt with in the same fashion; that side by side with a *Te Deum* there should be a *Te Virginem laudamus*. She was addressed as the Mother who could command her Son—language which, as we learn from an interesting communication of Dr. Newman's, has recently been authoritatively condemned at Rome. All power on earth and in heaven was declared to have been committed to her. As without the Son nothing was made, so without her, the Mother, nothing was remade. He was the Mediator, she was the Mediatrix. Saturday was dedicated to her, as Sunday to Christ. She had since the eleventh century an Office of her own. If a distinction was still maintained between the worship addressed to her and to the several Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, there was also a distinction drawn in the opposite direction between the service addressed to her and that offered to any other of the saints. Falling below the one and rising above the other, this *hyperdulia*, as Aquinas first named it, occupied a middle place between the two.

This cult of the Blessed Virgin,—in the pushing of which to well-nigh insane excesses Cardinal Peter Damiani (d. 1072) obtained a bad pre-eminence,—fell in with the spirit of chivalry which was everywhere abroad, encouraged this, and was itself encouraged by it. In such names as Our Lady, Notre Dame, Madonna, we hear the language of gallantry and that of devotion blended into one; nor is it easy to measure the extent to which these

evoked and mutually sustained one another. The fact that this cult inspired a poetry and a painting of beauty the most transcendent,—creations of loveliness that without these springs of inspiration would never have come to the birth,—all this may be freely accepted ; but accepted without any acceptance of a conclusion which is often deduced from it, namely that what is so beautiful must therefore also be true. This does not by any means follow. Greek Art, in many ways unsurpassed and unsurpassable, roots itself in the Greek mythology. They were the gods of the Greek Pantheon, a Zeus or a Pallas Athène, gods which were no gods, that inspired a Phidias ; but that Greek mythology receives no seal or attestation of its truth hereby. There is a world far higher than the world of Art ; and when our youthful poet, ‘the young Marcellus of our tongue,’ exclaimed, ‘Beauty is truth, truth beauty,’ he was transferring into the present imperfect condition of things that absolute identity of truth and beauty which indeed shall one day be, but only in that glorious future which is still waiting to be revealed.

Reliques play so important a part in the whole religious life of the Middle Ages that I cannot pass them by altogether. Dean Milman has said whatever can be said in their favour by one who regards the whole matter from without ; and more certainly than I should be disposed to say. If in the honour done to images or icons the Eastern Church left the Western very far behind, it was quite the reverse in the matter of reliques. There was in the West a far more active, probably a far more deeply seated, faith that miraculous virtue resided in these and went out from them. The eagerness to possess some famous relique surpasses all belief. City would go to war with city for its possession ; monks, who would

have stolen nothing else, would set forth on a raid to bring away from a neighbouring monastery some precious relique with which to enrich their own. St. Romuald, founder of the Order of the Camaldolese, hardly escaped death—martyrdom shall we call it?—so eager were some of his admirers and worshippers to turn him into reliques at once, fearing lest he should die in some distant land and his remains be lost to them.

Very singular were some of these, which were thus prized as above all price. Thus it is difficult to understand how, unless by a continual miracle, a tear of Christ should not long since have dried up. Curious too are the following—a chip of the broken tables of the Law; of the pillar to which the Lord at his scourging was bound; a fragment of the bread which was over and above at the miraculous feeding of the multitude; the chains which fell off from Peter's hands in the prison of Herod; that other chain by which Paul was bound to the soldier—filings from either of these being costliest gifts from the Pope to monarchs; the Blessed Virgin's veil; a remnant of the taper which burned by her bedside when dying; a palm branch borne by an Apostle at her funeral; and perhaps the most curious of all, some of the wood of the three tabernacles which St. Peter proposed to build on the Mount of Transfiguration. As you may easily imagine, a very active manufacture of spurious reliques went forward in those ages, fraud and superstition playing into one another's hands. The mere fact that objects which in the nature of things are unique, so that the possession of them by one excludes the possession of them by every other, should yet be claimed by many, is sufficient evidence of this. Thus if the Chapter of Trier have indeed the seamless robe of Christ, the twenty other bodies, for they are twenty at the least, which also

boast that it is with them, must either be deceived or deceivers. But let so much on this subject suffice.

The immense development of the sensuous and the symbolic, whereof I have spoken elsewhere,—the mistaken confidence that men might be effectually taught by the intervention of these apart from the living and interpreting voice,—did much to throw into the background that homely but direct preaching of the Word, that divine ordinance whereby souls are saved. Sermons in stones may be good, but a few lively oracles from lips that God has touched are worth many times more. Do not suppose, when I say this, that there were not illustrious and laborious preachers in the Middle Ages. Of many such we know, and these many are few as compared to those of whom we do not know. Not a few famous in other lines were also famous in this ;—as St. Bernard, as Thomas Aquinas, as Innocent III., as Bonaventura, as Tauler. Others there are, whose reputation with the after world mainly rests on their excellence as preachers. Let me name, among the Dominicans John of Vicenza (cir. 1230), author of a wonderful revival in Italy,—a revival indeed marred, like that of Savonarola, by the suffering of a political element to mingle with it ; and Vincent Ferrer of the same Order (1357–1419), an indefatigable evangelist, by one means or another making himself understood in so many lands—England, Scotland, and Ireland being all included among these—that men ascribed to him the gift of tongues. More famous still is Bertholdt of Ratisbon (d. 1272), popular as the best Franciscans knew how to be ; and of whom we are more able to judge than of most, a large number of his sermons having reached us. It must be allowed that the new style of popular preaching, mainly introduced by the Mendicants, if it had merits, had also defects and dangers of its own.

These preachers *from* the people, addressing themselves *to* the people, and more *ad plebem* than *ad populum*, sought sometimes by questionable methods,—by legend, by jest, by buffoonery,—to secure a hearing for themselves and for their message. In the Capuchin of the *Prologue* to Schiller's *Wallenstein* we have a lively sketch of this popular preacher at a somewhat later date; yet no doubt very much the same man as he had been two centuries before, and seeking to make his effects by the same arts. But the history of Medieval preaching still waits to be written, and in skilful hands would prove well worthy of the pains bestowed upon it. In Maitland's *Dark Ages* there are some valuable contributions to such a book.

I have spoken to you already on the system of Indulgences, which assumed so fatal a prominence in the later Middle Ages. When we have at all realized to ourselves what a system like this in actual working must have been, we are tempted to wonder how any high Christian life could have maintained itself at all, in the face of a machinery so disastrously adapted for the lowering of the tone of that life, for robbing God's judgments of their terrors, and man's repentance of its earnestness. We can only account for the survival of this life by the fact that there are very few who in actual practice push the principles which they profess, and the doctrines which they accept as true, to their ultimate consequences. The good which men embrace does not make them so good as they might and would be, if they followed it to all its legitimate results; nor yet the bad so bad. 'Pardons are from hell'—this, which once a Franciscan friar in his righteous indignation exclaimed, might be quite true, and they might bring many there; but despite of these 'pardons,' and of men's trust in them, and even then when they were most in vogue, there were numbers who strove to

enter by the strait gate, and whom God had taught in his own school that the means for making this entrance sure were not remissions of sin bought with money, but faith and penitence and prayer; that, as another said so well and in the worst of times, 'Christ is the only Indulgence.'

We have dwelt on some aspects of Church life in those ages, which are, or ought to be, a grief and sorrow to us. But that life had much fairer sides as well. In all ages, wherever the Gospel comes with power to the hearts of men, it shows itself 'full of mercy and good fruits.' It would be a serious injustice to the Church of the Middle Ages to suppose it barren of institutions for the relief of human wretchedness and woe. So far from this, the multitude and the almost endless variety of these are among the most attractive features which those Ages present. When we bear in mind the imperfect social organization of those times, how little the State undertook to look after its children,—indeed, it can hardly be said to have undertaken to look after them at all,—it is easy to imagine to what frightful heights this misery might have risen except for the alleviations of it which were thus afforded. If, after all was done, the open sores of society were not healed then, we must in fairness remember that they are healed as little now. The wretchedness that was in the world outstripped then, as it outstrips now, the most strenuous efforts to overtake it. But the efforts were not wanting; and they had their measure of success. Whether in proportion to means and opportunities these efforts were as great or greater in those ages than they are in the present, He only can tell who writes in the book of his remembrance all that is done,—and all that is not done,—for the least of his brethren. Let me here speak a little of the

heavenly plants which then as now, springing up under the shadow of the Cross, and twining round its stem, were by it sustained, being watered and kept green by the precious dew which evermore drop and distil from that sacred Tree.

In ages when pilgrimages were so rife, and those who made them were regarded as occupied in so good a work, there naturally were not wanting houses of rest and refreshment for the reception of such as were on their way to the Holy Land, to Compostella, or to some other sacred shrine :—these houses by the very necessities of the case being hospitals for the sick and worn and way-weary as well. The Knights of St. John were at the outset no more than male hospital nurses, who waited, for the love of God, upon the sick, first under the walls of Acre during its long siege (1191), and afterwards elsewhere in Palestine. These, after they had added to the humbler duties first undertaken by them the warring against the infidel, did still, by the aid of lay-brothers who were associated with the Order, remain faithful in a measure to the objects of their first institution.

The Monastery, whatever might be the relaxation of discipline and the disorders within its walls, rarely forfeited its character for hospitality extended to rich and poor alike. Nor is it possible to read without admiration the gracious courtesies which, according to the Rule of St. Benedict, should evermore accompany the reception within cloister walls of the wayfarer and the wanderer, of rich and poor alike ; devised as these were for the making of all who shared in this hospitality to feel that they rather conferred a favour than received one. When some bring a charge against the monasteries, that, by an indiscriminate distribution of alms, they fed and fostered the poverty which they professed and seemed to



relieve, the charge no doubt is a true one ; but what is this after all but saying that the monks shared in the economical errors universal in their time ; and if herein they offended more than others, this was only because their bounty was on a larger scale ?

I need hardly mention that the Penitentiary for the raising to a new life of holiness women who had fallen deeply into sin is no modern institution. The Order of Fontevraud, founded by Robert of Arbrissil (1094), made these unhappy ones its peculiar care. And as little is the Foundling Hospital a modern experiment. Whether in actual working this does not generate more evil than it prevents may well be a question ; but with the widespread prevalence of infanticide, not in the heathen world only, but in the nominally Christian, it was inevitable that earnest men should make proof whether some help was not in such institutions to be found. Lay guilds too there were—they survive in Florence and in other cities of Italy to the present day—which occupied themselves with the decent and reverent carrying of the Christian dead to their last home. There was a leper-house, Muratori tells us, in almost every city of Italy—rendered necessary as these were by the prevalence and extreme malignity of leprosy as in those ages it existed, a malignity which it now retains only in the East, if, indeed, in the worst forms it retains it even there. For the carrying out of the active service of love which these houses needed there were organized companies of men and women, recruited not seldom from the noblest families of the land, and who did not shrink from the most repulsive offices which this service entailed. Elizabeth of Hungary will not here be forgotten (d. 1231).

It is very interesting to note the thoughtful care which devised charities such as would have scarcely or not at

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all suggested themselves, where there was not a very lively sense and a very tender consideration of the wants of others. There were Bridge-builders, associated for the building or keeping in repair of bridges for the use of wayfarers,—of pilgrims above all. There were guilds for the waiting on and ministering to criminals condemned to death, a far more numerous class under the rude and rough administration of justice which prevailed in those days than they are at present. Then too there were associations, monastic or semi-monastic, as that of the Trinitarians, as that called *De Mercede*, which took as their distinct mission the redemption from slavery of such as by evil hap had fallen into the hands of the infidel. There were found heroic souls in these Orders, who, when other ransom was not forthcoming, and when for one reason or another the case would brook no delay,—as for instance, when there was danger of a perversion to Islâm,—bought the liberty of a captive at the price of their own. Indeed, an engagement not to shrink from this last act of self-sacrifice, if need so required, constituted a fourth vow which was taken by those who entered these Orders, in addition to the ordinary three.

There were other benefits, and they were not small, of which the Medieval Church was the source and spring in times wherein men, owning, as it was, very few and slight restraints on their passions and appetites, would, except for restraints by the Church imposed, have owned no restraints at all. To the Church was due the attempt, not wholly unsuccessful, to set some sort of limit to the prosecution of private feuds, by the institution, in the eleventh century, and first in Aquitaine (1041), of what was called 'The Truce of God.' By this it was forbidden to wage these hateful private wars on certain days of

the week ;—not on Thursday, being the day of our Lord's Ascension ; nor on Friday, as that of his Passion ; nor on Saturday, as that when He rested in the grave ; nor on Sunday, as the day of his Resurrection,—not, that is, from Wednesday night until Monday morning ; the Truce was also to prevail during certain sacred seasons of the year. At the same time the Church took under her protection clerics, monks, lay brethren, pilgrims, labourers going to or returning from their work, women and children,—all of whom were to remain unmolested and free to move backward or forward in the midst of the men at arms engaged in these quarrels. It need hardly be remarked that all these ordinances of mercy were most imperfectly observed, were continually violated ; but they were very far from being wholly inoperative or without their value, as some might hastily assume.

Then, too, it was from the Christian Church that any effectual impulses proceeded for the bettering of the condition of the slave and serf, and for the final extinction of slavery and serfdom. Travelling in the lines marked out by the Apostles themselves, and mainly by St. Paul, the Medieval Church did not, any more than the Apostolical, denounce slavery as a wholly unlawful institution ; nor seek with revolutionary violence to overturn the entire existing framework of society with its several orders and conditions of men. But while she bore with this, she at the same time always taught that the master did an act well pleasing to God, who, either in his lifetime, or by testamentary disposition and, as it was then called, 'for the remedy of his soul,' gave freedom to the servile members of his household.

Much too the Church effected for the bettering the estate of those for whom the hour of their full emancipation had not as yet struck. It was impossible that the equality

of all men in the world to come,—and before God already in this world, as in a present kingdom of heaven,—could be proclaimed, as in every act of the Church it was proclaimed, without seriously modifying the relations between master and slave. There might still be room only too large for the exercise of cruelty and caprice ; but something, nay, much by this proclamation was accomplished. Nor did the Church teach here by precept only, but also by example ; pointing as she did to the hinds and labourers on lands held directly by ecclesiastical bodies, and to the thoughtful kindness and humanity with which for the most part they were treated, as a pattern that secular proprietors might do well to imitate. Some have recently sought to deprive the Medieval Church of the honour which is her due, as the prime mover in the emancipation of the serf and the slave ; or, where her influence reached not so far, in a partial mitigation of the harshness of their lot. It is no more than justice to declare that, if many causes wrought together for the gradual diminution, and in the end the extinction, of slavery in Western Europe, here was very far the most effectual of them all.

## LECTURE XXIX.

*THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION.*

LET us plant ourselves in the times which immediately preceded the Reformation ; and seek, so far as this may be, to realize the several aspects under which the future of the Church and of the world must have presented itself to the thoughtful and to the careless observer. And first to the careless. To one who dwelt but on the surface of things, at no time would the Church have seemed to have a better right to say, 'I sit as a Queen, and shall see no sorrow.' What had she not overlived of danger and distress, coming forth as she had done, to all appearance not seriously damaged, from the profound humiliations of the Avignonese Popedom and the Great Schism ! The decrees of the Three Councils, by which it had been sought to place some limits on the absolutism of the Popes, had been, some secretly evaded ; others openly set at naught, or solemnly reversed. At the same time the Councils had done for the Papacy what probably no other, friend or foe, could have done for it. By their aid the enormous scandal of Pope and antipope anathematizing one another had ceased, and, as the event proves so far, had ceased never again to be revived.

In many other ways too the situation was better than before. The sects which had been so threatening once,—which, in a mistaken confidence of their own strength, had challenged the Church of Rome to do battle

for her very existence,—which had honeycombed the very ground on which she trod,—these, so far as they still existed, were but as the thin ghosts and the pale shadows of what once they had been. The conflagration kindled in Bohemia by a spark from the funeral pyre of Hus, had fairly burned itself out. The sword of the crusader and the scaffold of the Inquisitor had proved more than a match for the Manichæan sects, the whole elaborate network of whose secret organization had perished. A like fate had befallen the pantheistic antinomians,—Brethren of the Free Spirit, and others, by whatever name they were known. There were scattered Manichæans and Libertines still; these, however, not defiant as once, but only too glad to escape notice. The Waldenses alone as a visible body survived, even as they alone deserved to survive; but these, thrust back into their Alpine retreats, were neither in numbers, nor organization, nor aggressive energy calculated to inspire any serious uneasiness.

More really formidable had been those single Reformers before the Reformation, who, during the later Middle Ages, had in different quarters lifted up their voices against the corruptions in doctrine and in practice of their time, often with the foremost Universities to back the protest which they raised. But here too the contrast was remarkable between the violent revolt of the first half of the fifteenth century and the tame submission and acquiescence of the second. The leaders of this revolt had one and all passed away, leaving, as might seem, no heirs of their faith behind them. Of Wiclif I have already spoken at large, and of Hus. John Wessel, of Gröningen,—‘Light of the World’ his admirers called him, but his enemies, matching one exaggeration with another, ‘Master of Contradictions,’—protected by

powerful friends, had died in a peaceful old age (1489). John von Wesel, often confounded with one who was so nearly his namesake, uttered some brave words against Indulgences, but had closed his days in confinement (1482); having only by a timely retraction escaped the fiery doom to which his writings were delivered. Savonarola (b. 1452, d. 1498), the fervent Dominican of Florence, would fain have reformed the State no less than the Church; but his grand work, through this error and through the mingling of his own apocalyptic fancies with the word of God, as if those were of equal authority with this,—had early made shipwreck; and he had fallen an only too easy victim to the hatred of the wickedest among the Popes, namely Alexander VI. (1498). A Puritan Florence, such as he was fain to bring about, would have been too cruel a satire on Papal Rome. And other slain witnesses there were, whose dead bodies lay unburied ‘in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt:’ but to whom no voice from heaven, ‘Come up hither,’ had as yet been spoken.

The only Theology in which there dwelt any originality and power, that namely of the Mystics, if it did not undertake the defence of the Papal pretensions, as the Scholastic had done, yet displayed no hostility, was quite content that these should stand; as in speaking of the Mystics I have sought more fully to show.

But, however fair to see might be the outward semblance of things, there was danger lurking behind, and danger that was everywhere. The sullen discontent of some, the righteous indignation of others at the whole character of the arts with which Rome met or eluded the demands for reform, a displeasure which the unholy lives of the Clergy would not allow to sleep, was growing intenser every day. Western Christendom was no longer

acquiescent, as it once had been. It had outgrown its minority, and felt that it had done so. That long course of discipline by precept and prohibition, to which untutored races newly brought within the pale of the Church, German and Slavonic and others, had been submitted, may have been necessary; it could probably very ill have been spared; but these races did not the less feel and resent this as a vexatious and meddling tyranny now that they were conscious of having arrived at full age, and entered into the liberties which belonged to their manhood. The rudimentary Christianity, the 'elements of this world,' to which they had been subject so long, had not been without their use as a 'schoolmaster to bring them to Christ;' and the education through which they had passed, though rather of divine sufferance than of divine appointment, bore a certain resemblance to that which the earlier people of God had gone through, while they too were under tutors and governors. But such an elementary education in the things of the kingdom of God, to justify its existence, must be merely transitional, and must look and lead on to a better, for which it is preparing the way. Rome, however, was determined that the bondage should be eternal; that the children, not any longer in their nonage, should be treated as children to the end. Religion may be, as an old poet has so grandly phrased it, 'Mother of form and fear;' yet, where she is true Religion, she proves in due time the mother of far fairer births than these. To her belongs not form only, but also spirit; not fear only, but also love. This truth they were resolved not to see nor understand, whom it most concerned that they should see it betimes, and with a prudent boldness act upon it.

Much else too there was which the dominant Church and her rulers either could not or would not see. Grey



hairs were upon her, and she knew it not. In manifold ways strength, departing from her, had gone over to the side of her adversaries; and had bequeathed to her a weakness which as yet did not know itself as such, but, most perilous of all, bore still the treacherous appearance of strength. What had been indeed defeats were counted as victories still. Thus, what apparently could have been more triumphant than the issue of her long struggle with the Councils? These, which had been the objects once of so much hope and so much fear, had utterly failed in securing any liberties for the Church, or in compelling a gradual and peaceable amendment of things therein which were amiss; but they had not the less left a profound impression on the heart and conscience of Christendom. Of this, however, I have spoken already.

In the same way the Monastic Houses had been at one time so many fortresses in every land, with the monks a garrison on whose fidelity the Church of Rome could safely rely. It is difficult to estimate too highly what their value to her had been. They had brought her reputation; they had furnished her with men trained for any work to which she might send them. The Papacy indeed without the Monks would have been impossible. The Orders still existed, but fallen how far! the oldest fallen the farthest, but all of them fallen; and, if there was one thing they hated, hating to be reformed and resolved that they would not be reformed; prepared to oppose the fiercest resistance to every attempt to bring them back to any strict, or indeed to any decent, manner of living. He was a bold man who attempted, though armed with the highest authority, the visitation of one of their Houses; he might have to carry it through at the peril of his life, or indeed at its loss. Of course there were honourable exceptions not a few, religious Houses in

which a godly discipline was still maintained ; but such, by the confession of all, were the minority.

How could this, under the circumstances of the time, be otherwise ? It is the unhappiness of institutions which are merely human inventions, that after a while they overlive themselves and the circumstances which may have justified them once. Having contributed all which they were capable of contributing to the Church's good or the world's, they thenceforward cumber a ground which they may have profited once. The reason of their existence having ceased, there is now one supreme favour which they could confer, that is, not to seek to exist any more. It is seldom, however, that those who are bound up with institutions which have thus overpast their time, see things in this light ; while yet the falseness of their position, and the consciousness of this falseness, which they cannot wholly escape, in many ways tell most injuriously upon them. The elevating sense of a true vocation is gone. The sphere in which a healthy activity is possible has grown much narrower, or perhaps has quite disappeared ; and this being so, it is almost inevitable that a rapid deterioration, moral and spiritual, should follow. So fared it with the older monastic bodies. The decay of discipline among them, the dissolution of manners, the dying out of all sense of corporate life, were everywhere making themselves visible to the eyes of all.

And if it fared thus with the older Orders, it fared only a little better with the Mendicants ; to whom good men and great had so fondly looked at their first appearance, hailing this appearance as little short of a new apocalypse. These too had betrayed the hopes so confidently built upon them. They might not have degenerated so far as the others had done ; whatever earnest theological studies were still alive in the Church,

they might be the main fosterers of these ; but their fine gold had also become dim ; and the most hopeful, if any were hopeful still, were compelled to own that the regeneration of the Church, her joyous return to the days of her youth, her renewal of her strength as an eagle, if it should come to pass at all, was not to come to pass through them.

The Scholastic Philosophy, which should have reared new bulwarks for the faith, which had so long borne the word for the Papal system and defended it before the intellect of mankind, could not pretend to do this with effect any more. Its alliance and support, invaluable once, was now rather an embarrassment and an encumbrance than a help. As a theology properly so called it had almost ceased to exist, and now only survived as a logic and a metaphysic. Spinning all its threads out of its own consciousness, as the spider from its own bowels, and persuaded that there was nothing which it could not spin from thence, it had obstinately refused to learn aught from experience and history ; and thus, wilfully closing one of the two main inlets by which knowledge comes to man, it had never been better than a Cyclops with his single eye : while even from that single eye all higher vision was now going or had gone. Drier, harsher, thornier every day, revolving still in the same circle of abstract ideas and stereotyped beliefs, it was the object of ridicule to some, of a deep indignation to others, who saw these husks with no nourishment in them set before the people instead of the wholesome food of God's word. When too Schoolmen could be found to affirm, as now some did affirm, that what was false in philosophy might yet be true in theology, the reason of their existence had manifestly passed away ; for, indeed, why did they exist unless to witness against such a God-denying lie as this, and to assert and vindicate the ultimate identity of all truth ?

The utter and final collapse of the Crusades had been a heavy blow to the Roman Church, as more than once has been intimated already. The world probably had never seen the defeat, on so gigantic a scale, of such passionate hopes, of such mighty efforts, of sacrifices so enormous. And saddest of all, despite of so much grand and heroic which these enterprises had about them, all true men must have felt that, conducted as they had been, they deserved the judgment which they had found; and while none were guiltless here, that the guiltiest of all were those, who claiming as of right the leadership of these wars of the faith, had often so frightfully abused the opportunities thus placed in their hands.

And worse than all the rest, or rather summing up all other failures in one, the central institution of those ages, the Papacy itself, had broken down. So much at least might have been demanded of an institution to which every other institution had been sacrificed, namely, that it should secure the unity of the Church. But what had been the fact? Again and again between two rival claimants to the highest throne upon earth, a power external to both had been compelled to determine which was a lying impostor, and which the divinely appointed judge and dogmatist of mankind. Then too, in place of setting herself in the front of the movement for a reformation of head and members, with a frank confession of past sins and shortcomings, now for a century and a half Rome had made it her main business to traverse and defeat every attempt at reformation:—when weak, to put off those who demanded this with illusory promises; when strong, to punish, so far as her strength reached, all who dared to suggest that aught was seriously amiss, or that any earnest reform was required. What fatal success attended her in both undertakings we have seen.

Add to all this that while abuses were never rifer, while

the lives of the Clergy were never fuller of scandal, while the Papal Court was never more venal, nor could less endure the beating upon it of that fierce light which will leave nothing hid,—the Invention of Printing (1440) multiplied a thousandfold every voice which was raised to proclaim an abuse or to denounce a corruption. A censorship and an Expurgatory Index might do something in the way of repression; but much escaped or defied the most vigilant control. And marching hand in hand with this wondrous Invention there was the Revival of Learning. This, among its other consequences, bringing men into nearer acquaintance with the early ages of the Church, made them aware how little the primitive times had known of a Pope or a Papacy in the later sense of these words; how slowly and by what gradual encroachments on the rights of others, in the face of what remonstrances and of what resistance, this huge dominion had grown up. It was easy too now to detect and expose the falsehood of some of the most important documents on which the Roman Canonists relied. The False Decretals are one of such documents; the so-called Gift of Constantine, ‘forged and falsely credited,’ as Laurentius Valla (d. 1456) boldly declared and plainly showed it to be, is another.

It takes much to stir men to any earnest indignation against evil, unless that evil in some way touches and hurts themselves. But the surpassing wickedness of so many among those who, during the latter part of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century, filled the Papal throne, the strange contradiction between them and the office they held, patent as this was to all, could not fail to rouse many thoughts. This contradiction was indeed immense. Those in the high places of the Church were as men who, having escaped an enormous danger, were prompted by the sense of impunity

to audacities of evil which they would not have dreamed of before. Shame itself had perished. What had been veiled, concealed, withdrawn out of sight, was now openly transacted, avowed, defended. There had been bad Popes before; but then, alternating with these, there had been good,—men of personal godliness, who would fain have set straight, if only they had possessed the insight and the power, some part at least of all which they saw so crooked around them. But regard the Popes from Paul II. to Leo X. (1464–1521), including both;—what less attractive spectacle has the Church or the world ever presented? ‘The very precursors of Antichrist’ one living at the time, and a faithful son of the Church, does not fear to call some of these. I shall not enter into particulars. There is much which I do not care to tell, not a little which I could not tell.

And yet one signal difference between these and such as went before them, and that a difference for the worse, I cannot forbear to note. Boniface VIII., Pius II., with others whom it would be easy to name, were not model Popes, nor models in any way. For all this they had some thought of Christendom as a whole, took some sort of oversight of it as one kingdom; and if they too often abused their grand position, yet they did not miss or ignore it altogether. But the men who sat on the Papal throne immediately before the Reformation—their horizon was limited to the pettiest and paltriest politics of Italy. The chief value which their high office possessed for them lay in the opportunity which it offered to snatch some worldly advantage for the family which they were founding, or at best to enlarge the so-called Patrimony of St. Peter. Who that knows anything of Italian history during the century before the Reformation will deny that for objects no higher than these

they schemed, intrigued, struck alliances and broke them, made war and made peace, conspired, betrayed, confounded in worst disorder things temporal and things spiritual to the infinite dishonour and degradation of both, invoked the most awful thunders of heaven to do the most unworthy work upon earth?

Such were some of the moral aspects of Western Christendom on the Eve of the Reformation. A few more words before we conclude. I have endeavoured in these Lectures to trace the manner in which all the great events and tendencies of the medieval times were leading up to the Reformation as to their goal; destined as that was to prove an unspeakable gain to the whole Church, and not to one section of it only. For indeed, while its full blessings belong to us who made it fully our own, even those nations of Christendom which, after a brief hesitation, put it back from them, could not escape the gains of it altogether. Hard words are often spoken of it by those who thus refused it—some of these, it may be, just, not a few unjust. Unjustest of all are these words, where the things we are reproached with having lost or let go, it was Rome herself who, by her long abuse of them, tempted the Reformers in a not unnatural indignation to cast away. Certainly I do not consent with those who set out with this maxim, ‘The farther from Rome the nearer to the truth;’—but I can understand them: and whatever fault may cling to this violent and exaggerated reaction, lies not wholly at their doors, but in part assuredly at hers who had done so much to provoke it. Thus, to take an example, the whole subject of the Intermediate State, beginning with our Lord’s Descent into Hades, is one which the theology of the Reformation has almost shrunk from touching; and this because of

the terrible mischiefs which had attached themselves to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory. What have been the losses hence ensuing may be guessed, but not fully measured, by the loud and angry denials that there has been any loss at all, which will instantly follow any assertion like that which I just have made.

But let there be in these reproaches thus cast upon us what amount of truth there may be, such as utter them owe an incalculable debt to that which they thus reproach. Where would the Roman Catholic Church be now, except for the great searchings of heart, the diligent setting of her house in order, the strengthening of the things that remained, which all by this visible judgment-act were forced upon her? We may speak slightly of the Council of Trent, and when dealing with matters of doctrine, it offers in its artfully ambiguous and elaborately qualified declarations, assailable points enough; but in the drawing again of the relaxed cords of discipline, that Council, which but for the Reformation would have never met, gave to Rome a renewed lease of life. Matters had come to such a pass, ills had grown so inveterate, that it was no more possible for her, of a free spontaneous impulse, to have reformed herself even thus far, than for a man to perform a painful surgical operation on his own body. This may be done for him; he cannot do it for himself. Where would now be her St. Teresa, her Philip Neri, her Charles Borromeo, her Francis Xavier, her Francis of Sales, her Vincent of Paula, at this day her just blazon and boast? They were not the fruit which the Church of Innocent VIII., of Alexander VI., of Leo X., was in the way to bear, or would have ever borne. Whatever Rome can boast,—and this is much,—of the grander forms of piety and devotion during the last three hundred



years, she owes to the mighty reaction and revival of spiritual life in the sixteenth century, forced upon her, as I would again repeat, by the Reformation; by the aid of which reaction and revival she encountered and put some bounds to the advancing wave that at one time had threatened to submerge her wholly—nay more than this, recovered much that for a while appeared to be lost to her for ever.

But these reproaches do not reach us from that quarter only. We too ourselves are sometimes tempted to say, and more often to think, that on those labour-pangs of so many centuries there might have followed a more glorious birth than any that we actually behold; for who among us, looking round on the Reformed Christendom which now is, will affirm that it has fulfilled the expectations that might have been cherished once? What remains but to acknowledge and to accept the fact with which in my first Lecture I started, and with which in this last I conclude; namely that everything here, in this world of imperfections, is more or less a disappointment and a failure; that this law of shortcoming, being universal, does not exclude the highest and the best; and that so it will continue until HE comes who shall make all things new, the Restorer and the one effectual Reformer of all. Much at that period to which I have brought you, and where I finish, through the sin and impatience of men was ill-done, undone or overdone. Let us own it freely; but not the less freely own that in what the Reformation rid us of, in what it obtained for us, in all that would have been impossible without it, there is matter for everlasting thanksgiving. 'Thou sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary.'

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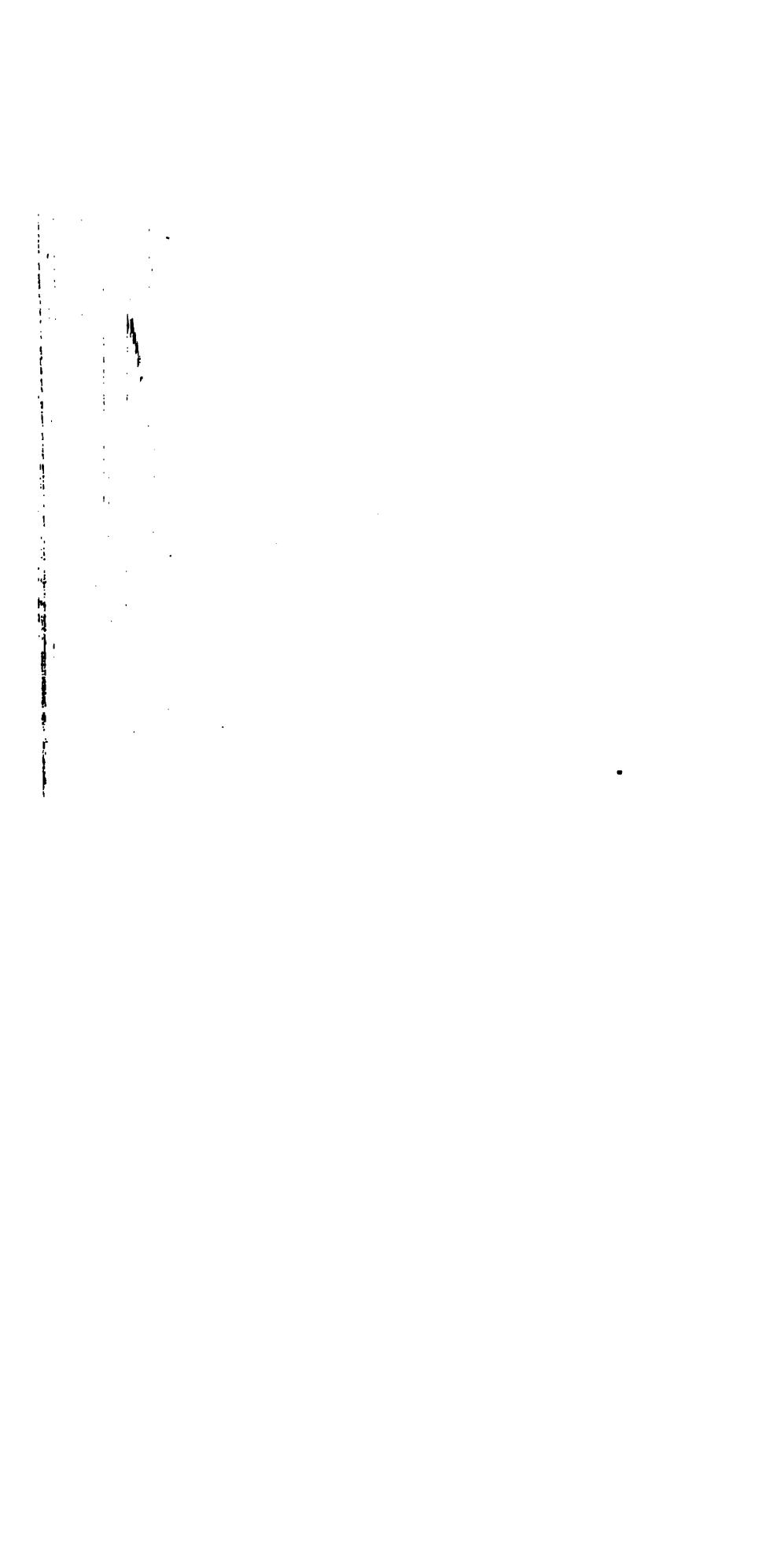
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